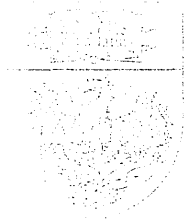

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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TORONTO

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BY

FRIEDRICH RITTELMEYER

Translated from the German by
S. M. K. GANDELL

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FOREWORD

THE following addresses were delivered from a conviction that it might be beneficial to talk about some of the greatest treasures contained in the Bible, and to offer them as a source of fresh inner strength, adequate to the demands of this great age and the great future which must follow. This conviction, announced before the addresses were delivered seems to have proved acceptable and serviceable.

The results of the most recent research and conjecture relating to the Lord's Prayer are of course familiar to the author. He cannot find anything convincing in them from a theological point of view. Their practical result was to cause him to stress Jesus as a model of inner conduct rather than Jesus as a source of certain sayings.

Serious and penetrating study discovers in the Lord's Prayer an inexhaustible store of great and new truths. We possess commen-

taries upon it by Luther, Matthias Claudius, and Johannes Müller, as well as fine sermons of Löhe, Kögel, Frommel, and many others. It was only a vivid personal experience of the quantity of hitherto unspoken truth contained in the Lord's Prayer which gave the author courage to add yet another volume to the immense literature relating to it. May each reader taste a little of the joy that fell to the lot of the author in preparing these addresses!

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

CHAPTER I

Concerning Prayer

TEXT: MATTHEW VI. 6-8

We are going to talk about one of the most intimate subjects which human beings can discuss, namely, prayer. Ought we to talk about so intimate and delicate a subject? Many people will say "No." But when we look at our contemporaries and see how helpless they are in these particularly intimate matters the yea's outnumber the nay's. There is one thing, however, I should like to request if we are really to venture upon a discussion of the Lord's Prayer this winter, and that is your coöperation. It makes a great difference if the congregation prepare themselves in their own fashion for the sermon even as the preacher has done. We can hardly conceive of anything more beautiful than an assemblage of people coöperating in the study of a subject of the highest importance in the very midst of this enormous city, in

the midst of our modern world which has lost touch with God. And if this coöperation is not only a silent one but becomes manifest in questions addressed to the preacher by letter or word of mouth, if he is allowed to take part in the successes or the difficulties attendant on the struggle toward a common end, you will see that this would mean that our services would be enriched and vivified to a degree we can hardly imagine. It would mean, in fact, the coming into being of a living congregation.

Let us inquire what people of the present day think about prayer. Why do so many of them, consciously or unconsciously, abstain from prayer or approach it falteringly? When we investigate the subject we find that there are no new and great difficulties, merely the two age old human queries, arrayed in modern guise and perhaps in scientific terms: "Can God hear?" and "Is it any use to ask?" Our text, containing almost all that Jesus has said about prayer, gives us in addition to much else an answer to these two questions.

We hear Jesus talking about prayer. He

does not say much, but what an appeal to our sympathies is contained in these few words. Perhaps there are but few persons we can listen to when they speak about prayer, yet he commands the entire attention of our souls. And that brings to mind the solitary nights of clear starlight which Jesus may have spent on the hills of Galilee, when the holiest events that ever occurred in a human soul took place in his, when marvelous discourse with the Father flooded the purest of all human souls, when it must have seemed as if a quite unique tone released itself from our earth and made its way to the farthest expanses of the heavens. If we could but live some of this over again! If a reflection of it were still to be found left behind on earth! This reflection exists, dear friends. It is contained in the Lord's Prayer. This is the very light in which we should regard the Lord's Prayer. We must jointly gaze through this reflection upon the light that shone in the soul of Jesus. But we must begin by imagining Jesus standing before us and asking, "Art thou willing to go up into the

mountain with me? Hast thou the needful qualities? There are two things I require of thee, silence and reverence."

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." It does one good to begin with, to find the element of compulsion totally excluded. "When thou prayest!" Consider the formulas and rules concerning prayer among all nations, how they regulate time and place, attitude and frequency, and we find this text to be a veritable act of liberation. A door opens, but no one is pushed through it, nor drawn through. There is only the friendly greeting above it, welcoming us—"Thy Father which is in secret." Yet the freedom of the text is balanced by severe conditions; its very friendliness constitutes a challenge. The temple which we must find in order really to commune with God is very deeply hidden. Are there still people to-day who pray "that they may be seen of men"? We need only attend prayer meetings, where extempore prayers are made, to see how dan-

gerously near we may be to praying so as to be seen of men, seen not outwardly but inwardly; the danger, I mean, of feeling that people ought to admire the conviction, and warmth and faith of one's prayer.

But let us consider our own case. How about our church prayers? Are they not also comprehended in this saying of Jesus? How glad we should be at times to know in what way these church prayers are taken up by the human heart. Does it pray them over again to itself, and does the expected blessing attend them? Unless I am mistaken, many words and even whole sentences pass unheeded by individual worshipers. Then comes a sentence or a word which awakens a deep individual response. That is like a door through which we go in to our Father which is in secret. And should this be the case, I think we should not then have any scruples about doing so, for this is what ought to happen. A church prayer is like a torch borne along at which anyone may light his individual candle in his own way and go in to his Father in secret.

Let us not confine our text so immediately to the inner aspects of prayer. Is it not an incalculable loss, though an almost unregarded one, that so many people do not know where to find a place in which they can be alone and undisturbed? How often, for instance, do I encounter this need among my candidates for confirmation. As soon as one of them desires to meditate and goes into a quiet room, there is a knock on the door. Perhaps it is a brother asking "What are you up to?" or a mother inquiring "What are you doing in there? Haven't you any work to do?" And even we adults, have we any time and place we can call our own, where we shall be alone and secure from interruption, even in the morning and evening, and not have to fear questions or surprise visits? Is it not a sign of the terrifying inner savagery of our age that people of to-day do not even feel aware of this lack? Jesus could go up into the mountain, but we, whither can we go? We are prisoners, imprisoned in a great city, imprisoned in the publicity of our lives, imprisoned in the sym-

pathy and curiosity of the members of our families. We dream at times perhaps of a country house with a beautiful garden. What we need far more is a little room with a good lock at the door. And we ought to provide ourselves with this at any cost if we really desire to make headway in our inner life.

At the same time it is hardly possible to understand the words "in secret" intimately enough. Let us ask ourselves if we are able to talk with God for a mere fifteen minutes without the world ringing in our ears. Not the world about which we desire to talk with God, but the other world which has to be excluded, the world of our immediate experiences, of our future intentions, of the things that upset us yesterday, of the events of to-morrow. There is even a further world in us which we must be able to exclude, all that we generally think about ourselves, and all that we feel; and still there is a surplus which we must exclude. We must commune with God in that inmost sanctum to which we do not admit even our nearest and dearest, because we cannot confess to any-

one how weak and miserable we appear in our own eyes. We must talk with God as if we were dead, and we were just a soul, alone with God in a realm of pure truth. Then we are in the temple in which God can speak to us. How well do we then understand the words "thy Father which is in secret." Perhaps none of us find him for more than moments at a time. But blest is he who can find him at all! And this is supposed to be an answer to the question, "Does God hear us?" Yes, this is the answer. The intellect continually queries, "Do not thousands of human prayers die unheard?" But the classical reply to the intellect was made long ago by the Psalmist, "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" This saying is as good a philosophical proof as it is possible to offer. Anyone who supposes that such a marvelous thing as the human ear simply originated out of nothing, that there was no living creative spirit guiding its evolution, or who supposes that this spirit has not reserved to itself the power to hear what it chooses to hear, is by no means a highly evolved

person. He is merely misguided, resembling our modern atheists. Suppose you ask, "How is it possible that God, infinitely exalted as he is, who reigns over thousands of worlds, should hear the sighs of all the millions of mankind?" How is that possible? "Possible?" Is that a word which can accompany us on entering the realm of God? Would a god whom we mortals could confine within the boundary lines of our "possible" be God? My idea is that in our prayers we do not address an individual solitary God, but a very vast, rich, and divine world in which our thoughts and wishes become realities, winging their way upward. When the Bible says that our prayers are carried by the angels to the throne of God, that is perhaps much nearer the truth than is believed today. God has not an ear such as man has but he has boundless life, and into this life we make our way by our prayers. And the more our prayers issue from our innermost selves the higher they ascend into this divine life.

Any one of us can have this personal experi-

ence; the more a prayer comes from the depths of our being the more elemental is our conviction, "My prayer is heard." It has made its way into the world of the truest realities, therefore it was not made in vain but has a significance even for the divine world. This is no more a delusion than it is when I plant a seed in a field and know that in some fashion or other it continues to live on in that field. It may not spring up perhaps but it continues to exist. "Thy Father which is in secret shall reward thee openly" is the reply of Jesus to those who hope to win external recompense in the form of honor and admiration from men by their prayers. Yet it also contains the answer to our question, namely, the more secret our prayer is, the more powerful and alive does it become in the true world, the world of God. And sometime and somewhere this will be made known.

"When ye pray use not vain repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have

need of." There we find enjoined the most delicate reserve on a soul's part toward God, just as we have already been warned to observe the most delicate reserve in our dealings with men and even with our own self. If we allow this text to produce its proper effect upon us, the right kind of prayer may seem to us to resemble a flower which turns away from the world and toward the sun, but opens itself as utterly to the sun as if it wished to transform itself into sheer sunlight.

Let us not talk overmuch about this. We will make a comparison by way of explanation of the mood which gave rise to these words. We will suppose ourselves standing in Hindenburg's presence, and one of our number stepping forward and making all sorts of suggestions about the conduct of the war to him at great length. Should we not all feel very keenly that such an act was an impropriety? If we do not have this feeling much more strongly toward God Almighty, what is the reason? Merely that our feeling of God's majesty is not strong enough. The only two

things needful for approaching God are silence and reverence, but both of them are indispensable. This is what we learn from Jesus to-day. If silence is the temple in which alone we can find God, then reverence is the ceremonial robe we must put on in order to approach him. Do many people, when they pray, know and feel in whose presence they stand? Their own thoughts and wishes converse together. The thought of God only slips between them once in a while like a shadow. If we go to visit a great man we first of all call his greatness to mind. Jesus wishes to express something of this kind when he says, "Your heavenly Father knoweth!" Let us suppose that someone always said to himself before starting to pray, "I must begin by letting all the goodness and greatness of God arise before my soul," and that he perhaps used up all the time he had for prayer in doing just this, and even then had not enough, and so could not make any petition at all. Would that be a foolish act? That would surely have been a prayer. A prayer that the glory of God might

become very real and living to us. Would not that in fact be the best prayer of all?

But would not all petitions for individual needs then ultimately cease? Jesus does not say so. Indeed the high point in the care of souls in our text is precisely this that although Jesus utters the great truth—"Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him"—he nevertheless permits full freedom of asking to mankind. This is a matter for each of us to settle individually. God's children are not at all alike. And prayer is only genuine and real when children talk quite freely and naturally with their father. Let us suppose an earthly father has two children. One is unruly and asks first one thing and then another. The other is quieter, says nothing but only looks now and again at his father with wistful and longing eyes. A real father will certainly not allow the second child to be overlooked because it has such confidence in him, nor will he punish the first child because it makes more demands on him. I shall never forget hearing two able men of wide

spiritual experience discuss prayer. One said, "I was an atheist at that time, but all the same when I was standing at the bedside of my sick child I prayed." Said the other, "It was the other way about with me, strangely enough. I believed in God at that time, and yet I could not bring myself to the point of begging that my child's life might be spared." And God proved a father to them both.

Most people when they pray do something which they would consider exceedingly rude in conversation. They go away as soon as they have said their own say and it is the other's turn to speak. "Prayer is talking to God." Certainly, but that definition cannot possibly mean that we are to do all the talking. Therefore we say there is a form of prayer consisting in allowing God to speak, and this is the higher form of prayer. If mankind were better acquainted with such prayer as this, and made more use of it, how dear prayer would become to them once more! We need but read of the deep bliss with which St. Francis of Assisi takes leave of Mt. Alverno where he

used to pray. Or we may call to mind the exquisite lines of Teerstegen:

Thou art in all things;
May thy loveliest light,
Lord, play on my face.
As the tender blossoms
Unfold their petals willingly
And stand quiet in the sunshine
Even so may I
Quietly and gladly
Embrace thy rays
And allow thee to act.

Or we can just think of the beautiful and mysterious words of Master Eckehart, "Who is able to abide in gazing on the magic mirror of God? No one who lives here and in time. But if the vision be taken from thee, return soon, that thou mayest behold it again, and let it be thy goal and thy refuge so far as lies in thy power." We may have various objections to the sayings of these "mystics" but who is there who knows what they experienced? Who knows of his own knowledge—what danger they ran of neglecting to live while engaged in prayer?

Christians discuss such a question as this, "Should we pray to God or to Christ?" These questions bring their own answer in this high form of prayer. If we are really determined to allow God to speak we shall not fail to find out what Christ is to us, and how we can pray our way into the purity and goodness of God *through* Christ, through his being and his life. Yes, take a single saying of Christ—how powerfully we can feel God talking to us therein, and so can pray our way into God by means of it. It is indeed my hope that the effect of this analysis of the Lord's Prayer will be that henceforward we shall not always pray the Lord's Prayer in its entirety, but allow an individual petition to live in us, weeks at a time, for many many hours, so that we may receive all of its divine life into ourselves.

Another question finds an answer too. Can we interfere with the course of the world by our prayers? And if we can, ought we to do so? Probably none of us knows at this moment what he might beg of God, at a time when his heart is greatly distressed. Still we may say

this much: no matter how strong the forces of thought nor how real the powers of prayer, the greater and more holy we consider God to be the less we shall interfere in his world-order by our prayers, except in cases where we may feel assured that he awaits our coöperation, i.e. in the making better persons of ourselves and in fighting the evil in the world. And if you were to say, "Yes, but on occasions Jesus has ordained that we should pray fervently and insist that our petition be heard," we must reply—"Very true, the more of the soul of Jesus abides in you, the more you may pray for that which you desire"! The attainment of the most priceless possessions does indeed involve struggle and sacrifice of an intensity which only a very few persons can even imagine, and in such a case it may truly be said that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence" at our hands. But let us not forget another event either. The only time that Jesus prayed fervently for something external and earthly—"My Father, all things are possible to Thee; let this cup pass from me"—it was denied him.

Let us above all things realize deeply and fully in connection with these words of Jesus, that all self-glorification in prayer is a totally wrong attitude. Then we shall know that the right kind of prayer is one in which we become less and God greater. And the best prayer of all is the one in which we are least and God greatest. Now we can also see how prayer is linked up with the goal of humanity. Naturally we all desire to become the sort of people who do not merely think of God now and then, but who think and act as if God were present, do so in his strength, yes, and in whom God himself thinks and acts. How unintelligent do people then appear—even if there are philosophers among them—who say that prayer is below man's dignity; that in God's eyes, it is whimpering. Not so. It is just in prayer, and only in such prayer as we have just described, that we rise to our full stature as men. In such prayer we begin to feel ourselves at home in a higher world. There is a world in which our souls are worth just the equivalent of our capacity for such prayer,

and that is the world to come, the divine world. The external world sees to it that we do not remain inactive in it. But we must conquer this inner world by our own voluntary efforts when once the door has been opened. Over this door is written, "Ask and ye shall receive!" We do indeed comprehend all the fervent and mighty sayings of Jesus concerning prayer when we have realized the fact that prayer is action, the highest, freest, innermost act of man. Prayer is the conquest of the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER II

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

We pass beneath the heaven of Jesus when we hear these first words of the Lord's Prayer. Just as we human beings live a bodily existence upon the earth with the heavens above us, so each of us can have an inner earth, his earthly task, over which he can build his own heaven, his truths, his hopes, his aims. How lofty, for instance, was the vault of heaven over Schiller's spirit, or Fichte's! And how gloomy and contracted is the heaven of many ordinary people; clouds everywhere hiding the view, with once in a while a beam of starlight!

"Our Father!" These are the simplest, most human words imaginable. And yet how they broaden out here to a vast and free vault of heaven, under which the Highest of all, Jesus, lived. And all the deeds and sayings of Jesus, if we examine them closely, are illuminated by

the reflected light of this heaven. Not otherwise than as in our world all objects, even those in our homes, become brighter or duller according to the amount of light flooding the expanse of heaven outside, so we see in all the deeds and sayings of Jesus the illumination of his heaven.

We could also have expressed it this way: Jesus takes us here into his innermost holy of holies. But this holy of holies is not a secret chamber, as it so often is among men, cut off from the world and visited at intervals; his holy of holies is built out as it were over the whole external world. Thus the world itself is transformed into a holy of holies. The heaven of Jesus—is there any more sacred subject for us to contemplate?

"Father!" When we have had occasion to state that it is necessary to train our ears in order to hear how wonderfully this word rings out from the soul of Jesus, making the most marvelous music ever heard upon earth, numbers of people have always asked, "Are you sure you are not mistaken? Are you not read-

ing something into it?" Now perhaps we have had the experience of being able to divine, from the manner in which somebody pronounced the word "mother," what his mother meant to him. It would be a real way of reading the Bible, and more valuable than most Bible reading, if we were to read through one of the gospels, in this case perhaps the Gospel according to Luke, and pause whenever the word "Father" sounds from the mouth of Jesus to listen, not to his ideas in that particular connection but to that which was living in him at that moment, and see if perchance somewhat of that life may reveal itself to us! This applies from the very first saying recorded of the twelve-year-old boy—"Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—on down to the last saying where Jesus so to speak irradiates a prayerful sigh of the Old Testament with the words: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" We may be well acquainted with the doubts expressed concerning the authenticity of one or another of the sayings, but we are not concerned with the

individual sayings. The soul of the word "Father" as uttered by Jesus must come to life in us. Or we can take such a saying as "The cup which the Father hath given to me, shall I not drink it?" and look from it into the darkest hours of our own life, or look into it from an actual dark hour we are passing through. It may then well prove to be the revelation of a wonderful world to us. And who will dare to assert, with reference to Jesus, "One can only speak thus if one has been spared suffering and all the terrible power of the Evil One"? On the contrary, the suffering of Jesus takes on fresh significance. He had to carry the word "Father" with him through all this darkness in order that it might be victorious over it. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done." Out of the deepest night shines forth the word "Father" in token of innermost and completest triumph over it. Again when Jesus was confronted with an ordinary experience in life, but one which may have at first appeared strange to him, for in-

stance when the wise men of his country would not listen to him, he recognizes in this event the secret will of God: "Father, I thank thee that thus hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Yea, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." How full and free the sound of the word "Father," how full of trust and reverence! We get the impression of a man, erect, with the heaven above him. Thus in all the words and acts of Jesus slumbers, deep down, the word "Father." We can really feel with regard to him, that the greatest joy of his life was expressed quite naturally in the word "Father." He had no bosom friend but he had his father. He had no home, but he had his father. He knew no comfort in life, but he knew his father. The utmost of joy in life and love of home and country that men can experience echoes back to us in the most exalted form possible when Jesus utters the word "Father."

You will ask, "How are we; in what way are we to attain to anything similar?" You have already heard half of the answer. Listen to

Jesus. Truth, the deepest truth concerning man and human life will reëcho in our souls when the time comes, if only we surrender our souls to him in all simplicity, just as surely as our souls were created to recognize truth. Hans Thoma once gave a very charming bit of advice to all those about to make excursions at Whitsuntide: "Mind you don't forget you have eyes; keep these doors of the soul wide open; then beauty will gladly enter in, for she is at home everywhere and seeks those who recognize her." Should not this also hold good for those who are Whitsuntide excursionists in a higher sense? Is God not at home everywhere? Does He not enter in gladly and seek those who recognize Him?

Still our souls have no firm hold on the answer until we hear echoing back to us out of our own life and our own fate, "Yes, there is a Father, there really is!"

And you dare to say this to us at a time when the blind and brutal struggle out yonder is cruelly blotting out human lives by the hundred thousand? Did not a rep-

resentative say the other day in the Landtag that men would desert from belief in God in droves as soon as they ask themselves where God was during the war? Now my dear friends, if one individual at the present time loses faith in God and another clings to it, is not that just the same as happens to trees in the storms of springtime when the same gale uproots one tree and strengthens another? The only point at issue is whether our faith in God is so firmly rooted that it can stand a really hard test. It is not possible to understand God's dealings with the world at large at one glance; we come closest to him in our own destiny as individuals. At some time or another there must issue from our souls, in a deep tone like the first sound of a new language the words, "My Father." This is the first step to be taken if we are to follow in the path of Jesus.

But the final goal of this path is that we should walk in this great and wide and puzzling world as if we were living in the heart of the Father himself. No longer must we see

death anywhere. Everything must be living, and as it were an opening through which we see the divine spirit, even as in looking at a flower we occasionally ignore its physical and botanical aspects and see in it only a revelation of spirit! Nothing must seem cold any longer as it does to-day. Everything must become warm, I might even say burning with love and life, just as if at every point we were looking with living eyes into the divine goodness! A realm of pure spirit and goodness. Such was our world intended to be, and such in its deepest aspect it is! Nowadays natural science is trying to decipher the world as if it were a strange language, making descriptive studies of its curves and lines and points but unable to read the writing. The farthest point science has reached as yet is a conjecture of the unity of all life, attained by physics, chemistry, and biology. But the end will be not a mere finding of unity and wisdom, but the finding of spirit, of goodness, of the Father. Then we shall be able to read the writing. Is that pure fantasy, a Utopian dream? Goethe was following this

path when, in his old age, he tells how pictures like Myron's Cow with Suckling Calf seem to him nothing else than living symbols of God's omnipresence and love. Then will the word which our ancestors once used in a sort of dreamy fashion—"All-father"—became unexpectedly real and true, and harmonize with the saying of Jesus, "My Father." Such an age must be brought about by man, and to this end was the Lord's Prayer given us.

And another age as well, *our* father. Let us concede that the Lord's Prayer, according to many scholars who have studied the earliest manuscripts, may have originally begun merely with "Father." None the less is that which lived in the soul of Jesus gloriously expressed in the words "Our Father, Who art in heaven!" Only we must not do as most people do, say *our* Father but think and live as if it were *my* Father. This very expression, "Our Father," contains so much tenderness and reserve, expressing a devotion which refuses to restrict God to individual needs, and by this very reserve attains to the realm of brother-

hood. If we look at the picture of the Lord's Prayer by Ludwig Richter we can see that something of this blessed secret contained in the word "our" has come to life in it. Yet it can be felt in a much greater and wider fashion. One's family life may be a very delightful one, but as soon as one says the words "Our Father" over one's family for the first time, the words and the family life will take on a new meaning. Or take such a group as this may reach. The pinnacle of our joint experience would be reached if we could, as one soul, pray in unison "Our Father!" And this idea applies even to the heaviest individual burdens. Suppose we are linked to someone with whom we have to live in spite of finding it desperately hard to do so. Let us try the experiment of saying "Our Father" when our eyes rest on this individual, of arching the common heaven of the Father over the pair of us, and we shall find our relation to one another fundamentally changed. Perhaps many of us know the fine advice which the poet makes a father give to his son concerning his relation with other peo-

ple: "Look through them into their hearts. In the depths of their hearts you will find longing. Trust to that." That is a profound and beautiful saying to live by. Jesus gives us to-day an even loftier counsel: Look beyond them to their father. In the presence of their father on high you will see nothing but goodness. *Strive* for that.

A vast educational force lies hidden from us in this word "our." Let us think quite clearly and specifically about our present enemies, about the English for example. Do we clearly see that we can in no wise avoid loving our enemies if we take the first two words of the Lord's Prayer in dead earnest? Suppose someone says: But the Lord's Prayer only applies to the circle of his disciples. Then we must reply: True, but in the meaning attached to it by Jesus the circle of disciples embraces all humanity, so there we find our enemies included once again. If we exclude anyone from the word "our" we exclude ourselves from the word "Father," from the god who is the father of all. And if anybody is afraid of weakening

in this imperative fighting as a consequence of doing this, let him look at Jesus.

Was he in any way hampered in his stern fight with his enemies by reason of carrying the Lord's Prayer in his heart? We will not go into particulars any further. But this much must be said to-day. The light proceeding from the word "Father" must be shed upon our enemies also; any thoughts and deeds for which we can make ourselves responsible after this has been done may be carried out.

We must throw this light in another direction as well. A man well versed in political affairs wrote to me recently that social upheavals are to be the most certain results which the war will bring to us. Whether he be right or wrong, we can do nothing better for the impending times of social struggle than fill ourselves day by day with the content of these two words "Our Father."

If you wish to realize the full glory of them, just call to mind the great message which came over to us from India during the past century *tat twam asi,* thou art that. Many people find

this kinship of being, this great common life of the universe, to be their highest attainable religious experience. "Thou art that!"—"Our Father!" Do we not feel how much more living, and spiritual, and warm, and creative and ennobling the latter phrase is? It is precisely in that which passes over from the word "Father" into the word "our" that we must find our finest source of energy for living with our fellow men. Someone said at the beginning of the war that we have now learned to pronounce the word "we" in quite a different manner—"we Germans." Similarly the Lord's Prayer exists for the purpose of teaching us how to pronounce the word "we" in a different manner—"we men upon the earth." And anybody who has spoken it thus in the sense of the Lord's Prayer, were it only on one occasion, in the depth of his soul when all alone, can get a dim idea of God's object in creating not alone an individual man but humanity.

Our Father . . . in heaven, or rather *in the heavens* when correctly translated! But can we imagine anyone brought up on modern

scientific ideas still retaining this childish faith in a heaven? We gaze aloft at the starry worlds; we find nothing there of the heaven of the men of old! When the wonders of the vast starry world were disclosed to man during the past centuries, men could have learned two things, not that heaven no longer exists but that "heaven" must be conceived much more inwardly than people in general were inclined to picture it, and that it must exist on a much grander scale. For, if the mere external greatness of God is so overpoweringly vaster than our previous conceptions of it, how great must be the inner glory which corresponds to this external greatness!

What is heaven then? A mere state of the soul? A mere feeling? No, assuredly not. You have only to feel the goodness of God very strongly just once to know that such an experience is no mere feeling but a reality, a world into which you enter, and which only announces and reveals itself to you in feeling. The *strength* of the experience is really the main point. Nor need we restrict ourselves to

one heaven; there are many of them. God's wisdom, wisdom considered in its own being, is *one* heaven, purity is *one* heaven, goodness is *one* heaven, and all these heavens together form one single world, namely, God. There are men, brothers of yours, who have entered these heavens and can tell you of them. Not indeed by saying what the modern world usually contents itself by saying, i.e. that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt in your philosophy. No, they say a thing which the modern world has to learn anew, that there is more of heaven on earth than our keenest aspiration dares to hope. But was this the sense intended by Jesus? Was he not thinking of an external heaven which arches itself over this earth and will one day sink down upon it? Well, my impression is, that it will one day be discovered that the men of old had no such coarse ideas as we attribute to them when they were speaking—if we may allow ourselves the expression—of their higher spheres. This coarseness is purely the result of the manner of distinguishing between outer

and inner events which we owe to natural science. Outer and inner events were connected by the men of old in a much more living fashion. This is why people find it so hard to get a correct idea of the sayings of Jesus concerning the kingdom of heaven, and do not know that the phrase may at one time refer to outward events and at another to inward ones. But however that may be, the heaven of Jesus cannot be comprehended by a survey of the ideas and concepts contained in his sayings about it, but only by the glory of a higher world which we see shining upon his soul. And that glory is indeed something to marvel at. "Our Father, who art in the heavens!" There we behold the glory shining! There the word "heaven" is illumined by the word "Father" and the word "Father" is glorified by the word "heaven." This applies, if we are to state the matter as it must be put to our modern world, against the pantheists who desire to address themselves to an impersonal world-soul only—Father in the *heavens*—and against the spiritualists who desire to make their way into the

other world by means of dark spirit-voices—*Father* in the heavens! If we think of Jesus uttering these words we see the human soul itself before us, which has become utterly a mirror in which the hidden and immeasurable Father in the heavens is reflected in his sanctity!

It has been said that the three stars of Christianity shine in these first words of the Lord's Prayer. All of faith shines in the word "Father," all of love in the word "our," all of hope in the word "heaven." Anyone who thus hears the Lord's Prayer within him will rejoice in it with his whole heart. Yet perhaps a more living way will be found by adhering to the words we said in the beginning. We pass beneath the heaven of Jesus when we speak these first words. That heaven lifts its vault to the uttermost heights—Who art in the *heavens*—and how many hidden high heavens and exalted glories may there not be? It reaches to the farthest expanses. *Our*—why we can take not only all mankind, but all earthly beings and indeed all conceivable beings of the whole

wide world along with it into our souls. But in this high and vast vault of heaven shines one sun, filling all depths and all expanses with its warm, living, golden light, and that is the word "Father." And it is beneath this heaven of Jesus that we pass as often as we pray, "Our Father, Who art in heaven!"

CHAPTER III

Hallowed Be Thy Name

How long shall we have to wait for the artist who will paint the Lord's Prayer for us in mighty pictures taken from the life of Jesus himself? Attempts of this kind already exist, e.g. by Edouard von Gebhardt in the monastery at Lokkum. But this task probably requires the very highest qualifications that can be demanded of an artist. And yet there is no petition in the Lord's Prayer for which a story in the life of Jesus could not be found in which the spirit of this petition must have been peculiarly alive in him. We have already enjoyed the experience of finding the whole being of Luther vividly portrayed in the hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God," which contains his whole nature and his whole history in such a way that one could tell children the story of the Reformation by choosing quotations from the lines of this hymn as illustra-

tions for the high points in his life. The outer and inner lives of really great men harmonize. But the most marvelous concord of the outer and inner life is revealed to us when we turn our eyes toward Jesus. What the hymn "A mighty fortress" is for Luther, the Lord's Prayer is for Jesus. An elucidation of the life of Jesus by means of the Lord's Prayer or of the Lord's Prayer by the life of Jesus, excels the best commentaries of the catechism.

What picture should be painted to illustrate the first petition—"Hallowed be thy name?" To illustrate the opening words—"Our Father who art in heaven"—we might think of the story of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple where for the first time the word "Father" rings out so wonderfully as a prelude to his life—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" We could also think of the baptism in Jordan, the prelude to his ministry—"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased!"—But when one is giving instruction to children—asking them to paint imaginary pictures of the Lord's Prayer as

church decorations—they find an even more direct expression of the first petition, namely, the purification of the temple. This story cannot but make us feel the spirit that dwells in this petition. Even those who are aware of the learned doubts concerning the exact wording of this petition are bound to gather from this story how transcendently the spirit of this petition must have been alive in Jesus.

Yet we must actually relive such a story as this in ourselves. Let us imagine we had crossed the courtyard of the temple with Jesus at that time. We should have heard the shouting of the sellers and the bargaining of the buyers and all the rest of the sacrilegious uproar. And perhaps we should have said to one another, "Really all this noise is quite unfitting in so sacred a spot!" And we should have done nothing. But now imagine this feeling burning up so brightly in a heart that it becomes action, mighty action, so majestic that even the opponents unwillingly obey, although superior in numbers and losing money by their obedience, action so free that it takes no account of the

possible consequences and dangers, action so pure that no personal considerations enter into it, action which enters the world as a sinless divine act—there you have Jesus! When people to-day have so little sense of the reality of Jesus, when they have so many doubts about him, historical doubts and dogmatic doubts, is not the reason simply this, that they lack the strength of soul to genuinely accompany him through one of these stories, beginning with the innermost feeling and culminating in the external act? Just look at the pictures of Jesus. Where, through all the centuries, is there even one picture of his countenance on which that look of flaming majesty could break forth which drove away those by no means timid money-changers in alarm? If we wish to know what "fundamental emotion" is, about which we hear so much to-day, fundamental emotion deriving from God and action resulting from this fundamental emotion, we have here the greatest, the most breathtaking prototype of it. We do not even ask the question "Well, what was the use of his act? The stall-

keepers were back again in a few hours, sitting in their usual places." We feel the act to have been an imperative revelation of the Christ-soul. That was the historic action born of the blazing desire of Jesus—"Hallowed be thy name!"

But that which once broke out in a mighty flame in this instance was also the tender pure light which always filled the soul of Jesus. We need only listen to him speaking about alms-giving, prayer, fasting, sacrifice. Which of us in making a gift for a good purpose, for the sake of God not for our own sake, does so with the feeling of inner awareness "I cannot approach God with my gift, I cannot even think of him, so long as there is anyone living on earth toward whom I have not a feeling of purest peace." Jesus felt thus. "Leave there thy gift before the altar, first be reconciled to thy brother." Who is there who feels that every act of self-denial, say in one's family, for the sake of the others has its purity clouded in the sight of God if one allows even a trace of sacrifice to be observed? Jesus felt thus.

"When thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face, that thou be not seen of men to fast." Who is there who feels in making a present to somebody, what a lack of delicacy there is and how unworthy in God's sight it is to allow one's thought to rest ever so lightly upon the act of giving, and how by doing so we tarnish both ourselves and the gift? Jesus felt thus. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth!" Who is there who feels that the soul of a prayer is forthwith slain if it be not an absolutely private matter between one's self and God, of which no one ever hears? Jesus felt thus. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." And the most amazing part of it all is that the most powerful actions are products of this exceedingly sensitive delicacy of feeling. If we are not able to feel the truth of this ourselves, men will be found in a hundred or a thousand years to inquire, "Where did men keep their souls in those days that they could not feel these things in the words of Jesus?"

You will say, "Granted that the soul of Jesus may have been like a noble harp giving forth the divine tone in a wonderful way. But how can this divine tone be sounded strong and clear in *our* lives? Can we, the people of the present age, whose experience deals mainly with nature and, it may be, just a little with our own soul, ever reach a really strong sense of the holiness of God?"

We will try to find a perfectly modern reply to this question. Kant's famous utterance comes to mind, "Two things fill my heart with ever new and increasing astonishment and reverence; the starry heaven above me and the moral law within me!" The starry heaven above me! The calculations made by astronomers during the last decades and centuries about the starry heavens, those gigantic estimates concerning the distances, the energies and the times up yonder would speak to us in overpowering terms were we not so dull. The heavens do truly declare the glory of God. And not only do they declare the immeasurable exaltedness of God, though this alone

should fill us with the deepest reverence and sanctify us; the changeless regularity with which the stars come and go in their courses up yonder, exact to the second—do we not sense in this the breath of the divine holiness? Do we not sense that all this marvelous regularity is nothing else than the holiness of God radiated down into visible earthly and bodily form? If at times we cannot sleep at night let us think that the walls enclosing our room and our house are of no significance, that outside them the stars are interweaving their majestic orbits and that the melodies and harmonies of the quiet firmament surround us with song and sound. Verily, we can then experience something not less grand and majestic than the vision described for us by Isaiah when he saw the angels around the throne of God, crying without ceasing, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth!" Yes perhaps this is the very way in which we can experience it anew, from a modern standpoint. And are the stars not there by day, because we do not see them? Why, we are living in a starry world. It is the

great reality that surrounds us. And anyone who senses the endless revelation of deep, eternal, divine holiness echoing through him by day is living in the realm of reality. It is the spiritual world itself whose air we ought to breathe. Our German lyric master, Peter Cornelius, has portrayed this experience in his *Songs of the Lord's Prayer*:

The stars for ever chant high measures with enthralling sound
And sound enthralling and bright psalms abound
Which thou didst give my soul, wherewith to praise thee,
"Hallowed be thy name!"

But Kant tells us that he knows another thing which arouses just as deep astonishment and reverence in him—"the moral law within me!" Many people of to-day will not understand this phrase at all, though they talk so much about the "revelations" of their own soul. There was once a deep and exact thinker who was so aware of his conscience that it compelled him to reverence it as highly as the starry heaven up yonder. All sorts of things

are said about conscience to-day, about its origin, its development, its many aspects. Nevertheless it all comes to this: not man and what man has taught us speaks to us in our conscience, else could we not contradict the whole world in its name. Nor is it ourselves and our suggestions, else could we not pass judgment upon ourselves even unto damnation. Nor is it nature and her demands upon us, else could we not die joyfully for conscience' sake. It is in very truth the voice of God, calling us upward; the breath of his being by means of which we recognize ourselves to be the children of him who is holiness itself. And how easy it would be for us to understand Kant if we were to think over the day's events occasionally in the evening and ask ourselves, "How ought I to have done *this* and said *that* if I had woven into it all that I *know* of purity and goodness?" We shall be astonished at the wells of revealed holiness we carry within us, giving us ever higher and higher counsel. And we shall be terrified to find that in our inmost part we are not ourselves at all, but that God dwells

there in a holy of holies. How holy is this place. This is none other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven!

But every aspect of God's holiness which we can in any way conceive must not be retained for ourselves but be put to active use in life. There our life work confronts us, *our* life work. The highest declaration ever made at the conclusion of a life's work stands at the end of the gospel of St. John: "Father, I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world." We should try to carry somewhat of the spirit and glow of these words into all our little works, even the smallest of them. Like the priests in Böcklin's *Holy Plain* we should feel ourselves facing the altar of God, on which the flame rises straight aloft, with the deepest inner devotion during the accomplishment of even the smallest task. More still, we should feel as if we were devoting ourself, our whole being with all its revealed and hidden forces to this flame, "Hallowed be thy

name!" Our intellect works up above, watching to see that the work is executed aright, but our soul and our whole being, together with all the faculties in its depths, watches to see that the work actually is good and holy. Our ancestors used to summon all good spirits whenever they wished to accomplish anything of importance, and so should we, even if we are only writing a letter—to take an example from something all of us must often do—summon all the good spirits in the deeps of our soul, or perhaps by means of those deeps, into ourselves. We must gaze and create in the highest sense of the words. Gaze on the divine holiness through our conscience and create things of abiding value for the earth by our work. Such should be our life. We are well aware of the difficulty of applying what has been said to many kinds of work. Yet, dare we on this account set ourselves a lower aim?

This should apply not only to a task but to any fellow creature we encounter. There was an ancient belief among alchemists that as soon as one knew a thing's secret name one could

make use of it and command it. Every individual human being is a hidden name of God, and if we can at least conjecture this hidden name of God in him, we can *then* begin to be of real service to him. This is the answer I should like to make to members of the congregation who have made inquiries concerning intercession. In dealing with our fellow men the essential point is the nature of our innermost response when we encounter them. Just make this prayer, silently, concerning some fellow man of yours—"Hallowed be thy name" —and you will find a wonderful love for this person awakening in you, such a love as had seemed neither possible nor so near at hand. Henceforth his very faults will appear as overcloudings of the name of God within him, and it will be *right* for them to do so. And he himself will be made happy by us, because he feels our happiness although he cannot account for it. Speaking allegorically, we must treat our fellow men as if a royal captive lay hidden in each of them, and we must feed this captive by our words and deeds, at the same time assist-

ing each individual to detect and release his royal prisoner.

But especially must we have the greatest reverence for *our own* holiness. Did not his best friend utter a wonderful enconium upon a deceased German philosopher when he said: "No one not acquainted with him knows how seriously life can be regarded." And is it too high an ideal for us that others shall be able to detect in us our holy regard for our own self, and our longing to shine out into the world as a holy name of God? And more particularly those among us who can never seem to get the better of the lower impulses of our human nature can find in this petition a source of incomparable help. There have been men who plunged into ice water in order to subdue their passions, and who have meditated on snow crystals with all the power of their soul in order to become pure. But better than anything else it is to really unite ourself inwardly more and more with the petition, "Hallowed be thy name." By this means such a sense of inner purity can gradually be brought into

being that nothing impure can resist its power, and then the victory has really been won. Some have said, "Bring up your child to be pure, pure even to excess; this will be a great safeguard against later dangers and is easily transformed into inner purity." We say, "Let this petition become a flame of utmost strength and purity within you. It will make you clean within and without. It will make you holy even in the most bodily part of you."

Do not say, "The holiness of God terrifies me, separates me from him." God's goodness consists precisely in this that he desires to give us his holy spirit. As the sun's light and life travel to the earth along with its heat-rays so does the holy being of God enter into us along with the goodness. "May thy holy spirit overshadow us and cleanse us" is an ancient form of the first petition. And if we wish to do something really great for our country, especially just now when its old morale seems to be breaking down in so many directions, let us carry the first petition into effect in the manner so wonderfully told us by Jesus in the

gospel of St. John: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth." Yes, even to-day we can feel that this is so as oft as we feel the touch of Jesus. Let us bestow somewhat of this glory upon our country by our lives: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth."

CHAPTER IV

Thy Kingdom Come

There are old churches in which, beneath the consecrated edifice into which one enters, there is another and still more hallowed church, the entrance of which has to be sought. One may go in and out of the upper part of such a church daily for years without knowing what is concealed underneath. Not only the whole Lord's Prayer, but each individual petition thereof taken singly resembles such a church. One can recite them for years without even a faint idea of the hidden worlds discoverable therein. We must live with each individual petition for weeks before its mysterious depths open up to us. But the light by whose aid we find access to the holy of holies is none other than the light of Christ himself. By study of Christ, of his being and of his life, the petitions of the Lord's Prayer disclose themselves to us, one after the other. Accordingly we will study

the second petition, not asking what commentary Luther wrote about it in the catechism, but what commentary Jesus made upon it by his life. By so doing we can allow questions which have of late years given rise to the greatest amount of discussion amongst theologians to retire into the background, such as: When did Jesus expect the coming of the kingdom of heaven? What did he expect to be the nature of this coming? Even if Jesus had imagined that the coming of the kingdom of heaven would take the form of an impending, external, and violent catastrophe—and it does not appear to me that this has been clearly demonstrated—this is a point of secondary importance compared with the much more pertinent inquiry: What sort of a kingdom of heaven was it for which he fought? There can really be but one answer to this question: Regard him himself and you will know. The kingdom of heaven can only be a world in which *this* Jesus would feel at home. Here is the point of departure for our search. This kingdom of heaven must be on a large scale a

world such as his was on a small one. We may recall the lines which Conrad Ferdinand Meyer once spoke about himself,

> Over my being and my song
> Shines glacier-light the whole way long,
> That great and quiet radiance.

If even a poet may expect us not to pay such strict attention to the mere words of his poem but to seek for the radiance in his poetry and his nature, how much more must we strive for this point of view in studying Jesus! In his being and his sayings shines the most exalted glacier-light conceivable, the glacier-light of eternity. We must perceive the radiance of the kingdom of heaven for example in the sentence —"Having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it." We must also perceive the radiance of the kingdom of heaven in his life. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden!" Yes, even up to his saying in Gethsemane: "O my Father, if this cup cannot pass away, except I drink it, thy will be done." The great and quiet radiance! No one can give us a closer

view of the kingdom of heaven than this. Nor a more beautiful one. When we attain in meditation to a picture of the world as it would be, were its soul such as this, we have a glimpse of the loftiest conception possible in this world.

But we must not only behold this great and quiet radiance; we must also see how this radiance encounters and overcomes the darkness. No world-conqueror ever battled for so great an end as did Jesus, namely the royal rule of God over men. And no world-conqueror ever battled for his ends so superbly as did Jesus, so pure was he, so lonely, so mighty of soul, so forgetful of self. When we behold him in meditation, as e.g. he goes up to meet his enemies in Jerusalem—to the consternation of his disciples—all the grandeur and goodness of our nature longs to accompany him. We have already once compared this journey of Jesus to Jerusalem with the journey of Luther to Worms, perhaps the greatest event in German history. Luther was determined not to allow violence to be done to his conscience; Jesus was bent upon carrying the kingdom of heaven into

the capital city of his enemies. Luther was ready to be burned for the sake of his gospel. Jesus was determined to die and thereby to establish the reign of God upon earth. Luther takes his way trusting in God and obedient to him. Jesus goes up, the representative of a divine decision, for the sake of his people. How much more magnificent and divine is this. This is the picture in front of which we must learn to pray, "Thy Kingdom Come."

Not alone external enemies were concerned. Has anyone else ever attacked the other enemy of mankind, sin, to its farthest recesses with the same inescapable logic and truth and yet with such overwhelming kindness as Jesus? He stands before us as the great champion of the kingdom of heaven among men. Truly it is no sigh of longing but a world challenge to battle for God when he says, "Thy kingdom come."

But we only understand the sermon of Jesus aright when we regard it as a fight for the kingdom of heaven. Why does Jesus say such provocative things as this, "Whosoever smiteth

thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."? Does he intend this to be a command? Not so, light is working its way into darkness. Just consider what sort of a nature one must have to be able to do such a thing when occasion arose, not because of weakness but because of strength and kindness. Think what freedom from offended feelings it implies, what vast superiority to mankind, what divine strength and joy, and you know what the kingdom of heaven is. These words could not be more grievously misunderstood than by calling them the evasion of a weakling. They are cries of ecstasy pealing out from a transcendent feeling of life, wordless but radiant. And look at the parables. We are told an everyday story of a shepherd who lost a sheep. And then, all of a sudden, a light breaks, the state of the shepherd's mind, and through this light we gaze into a higher world, the goodness of God. Light has never made a stronger assault on darkness than in the sermon on the mount.

After we have made ourselves vividly aware

of all these things we must turn our eyes to the death of Jesus. There he is vanquished, he the great champion of the kingdom of heaven, as utterly and completely, to external appearance, as anyone ever was. We must feel all the deep, deep tragedy contained in our German myths which recount the death of Baldur, only in a profounder and more sacred form, when we hear of the death of Jesus. And if we experience the death of Jesus in this fashion we do so in the typically German way. We shall then learn how something takes place in us, naturally, but irresistibly, analogous to the feelings of a knight who has seen his lord slain. He now begins to fight in grim earnest, with renewed and superhuman energy, contemptuous of death. And we shall awake to a vivid perception in ourselves that this death was victory. The death of Jesus in the world was a victory over the soul, and therefore the innermost victory over the world.

And now we have reached the height where all the kingdoms of the earth lie outstretched before us, our own world included. As Ger-

mans we must agree that we must strive to achieve a Christianity that shall be broad, and free to all and world wide, if we are to live up to the demands of our cosmic mission. Therefore we ask, "What are the greatest ideals in life and for the future which have been set forth on earth outside of Christianity?" Let them step forth and stand comparison with Christ's kingdom of heaven. Two great ideals arise before us quite unlike one another, one out of a strange and distant past, the other out of our immediate age and environment, the Nirvana of Buddhism, and the "state which is to be" as conceived by socialism.

Nirvana! Let us not imagine for an instant that the old and genuine Buddhists were men like modern Europeans, who long for extinction from sheer weariness of life. They exerted their powers to the utmost in order to rise into the heights, the deathless sphere, as they called it. They were desirous of building themselves an inner "Wahnfried" * in this

* Richard Wagner's home in Bayreuth, whose meaning is "longing stilled."

world of illusion and suffering. Great triumphs were there achieved, the triumph of spirit over nature, the triumph of the inner life over the world without, the triumph of freedom over necessity, the triumph of that which is eternal over that which is transitory. Proudly superior to worldly things, and filled with free and lofty spiritual ambition, they trod the earth. "We live in lofty delight; bliss is our food as it is of the shining gods." We shall tell on another occasion how God lived in them also. But what a contrast when, alongside of theirs, we hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Thy kingdom come." Buddha says: "Birth is done away with, the second pilgrimage completed, the task accomplished; there is no more need of life in this world." Jesus says: "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and what will I, if it is already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" This world does not exist for men to rise above it, but to conquer it for God, to make it divine. What is lacking in Buddhism? Not purity, not bliss,

not human loving-kindness. But one thing is wanting none the less—the love that transforms the world! On the one side Nirvana, extinction; on the other love, divine creativeness. And now, with history to refer to, make your choice! Can we choose anything else than what Christ willed?

And how about "the state which is to be" of socialism? We will not speak of externals such as the nationalization of the means of production, etc. We will consider the ideal of the "state to be" as it lives in the visions of the best and most enthusiastic socialists. It is to consist of a humanity which has subdued all the forces of the earth to its service and continues to make them more serviceable, which administers the good things of earth with a lavish and happy hand, which offers equal opportunities and great freedom to all its members. It possesses all that the earth can give and bestows on everybody all that it can bestow! Have we underrated this ideal? Surely not. Still, what is wanting to it? In order that I may not speak for myself alone let me call as witnesses three

men, very different in nature and circumstances but alike in this one point, an earnest endeavor to ascertain whither those cultural ideals lead to which men devote their lives nowadays, and for which they strive. All three, John Stuart Mill, the English logician, Alexander Herzen, the Russian revolutionary, and Frederick Nietzsche, the aristocratic German moralist, look at the future of humanity with dread. These ideals lead, unless a new element enters, merely to a new and higher Chinese civilization, orderly on the outside, empty within, outwardly irreproachable and inwardly comfortless. Was their criticism too severe? What is the use of a civilization which does not enrich human life from within and make it different? The soul is wanting to this ideal, as life was wanting to Nirvana. The holiness which transforms man is wanting, as world-transforming love is wanting to Buddhism. The individuals are wanting whose food is the mysteries of God, who let themselves be ennobled and purified from their inmost depths outward and thus sanctify and

bless the world around them. In this manner we are led to feel the need of the world that we should be true Christians. And the petition "Thy kingdom come" may appeal to us with tremendous force as the secret cry of longing sent up by our age!

We ought further to try to release ourselves from two false forms of Christianity, one that is too feeble and one that is too narrow. As children we prayed that we might go to heaven. Jesus bids us pray, "Thy kingdom come." One must first have realized the difference between these two types of Christianity in order to notice how our age is everywhere permeated by the following false impulse: "Christianity has to do with the heart: it has nothing to do with the world and with life." But only a senile religion could allow itself to be shut in, like an old man in his room. A single look at Jesus ought to cure us of this enervated Christianity!

But is it not our lot as Christians to await the coming of a better world? Observe that here we are threatened by that narrow concep-

tion of Christianity which we are bound to rise above. We must, it seems to me, imbue ourselves completely with the feeling that we *dare* not hope for another and a better world unless we do all that God has placed it in our power to do to bring it about. This much at least is clear to us: our coöperation is counted on for this world. And our coöperation in this world will help in some fashion to bring about the other one. Let us struggle as if faith were futile. Let us have faith as if struggle were futile. So shall we keep closest to Jesus. Let us concede that this world will slowly and painfully spiritualize and ennoble itself in the course of thousands and hundreds of thousand years, as I for my part believe; that it will pass through planetary and cosmic catastrophes; that there will come a time when those who have made the cause of God their own will be separated from those who have held back from so doing, that our activity after death may serve other loftier purposes or, as I believe, even then be used to the benefit of earthly evolution; one thing is certain, God will tri-

umph. And he calls on us to-day to triumph with him. Therefore we must free ourselves from the feeble Christianity which is concerned for the soul of the individual rather than for the world, as well as from the narrow Christianity which hopes for heaven instead of working for it. There are other forms of work for the kingdom of heaven than the winning of souls, the distribution of leaflets, organization and holding of meetings: anyone who assists truth to triumph—for beauty also belongs to God—anyone who helps spirit and goodness on to victory, nay more, anyone who aids in the development of the forces of the earth to the end that human faculties be enlarged and world conditions be improved, may feel that he is serving in the spirit of this petition, "Thy kingdom come." For he is working to the end that God shall ultimately be all in all.

Henceforth nobody need ask "What can I do?" Fill yourself with the spirit of this petition, let the whole desire of your life be directed to "Thy kingdom come" and you will discover innumerable things you can do. And

if the affairs of the world seem to demand too long a time we have an inner kingdom entrusted to our rule which can be completely transformed into a kingdom of heaven, namely our soul. Such was the nature of Jesus; entirely illuminated by a great revelation—the being of God—entirely aflame with a great desire—the will of God—and therefore sanctified in his whole thought and feeling and will. Thus he founded an order of divine nobility upon earth. And this petition is a prayer that we may be admitted to membership in this order of divine nobility, where individual desire ceases and only divine desire remains and yet —we can feel it in the petition—there is no sacrifice, only fulfillment; no self-denial, only self-perfection. But this petition must actually work in us as if we were Prometheus who fetched the divine spark from heaven in order to bring it down to earth.

What are we placed on earth for? Have we ever attentively considered the question? We will not be satisfied with less than the highest attainable end. May I take this to be the deep-

est and innermost wish of us all? Well then, who can name a higher end than the kingdom of heaven? If we decide in its favor once and for all we feel as if we had been lifted out of this world, and yet as if we had been securely established here in this world. It is like receiving the accolade of a higher world for use in this one. He who speaks to you here may perhaps be allowed to tell you that he passed this church twenty-five years ago without the faintest idea that he would ever preach in it, being then as forlorn and helpless and beset by doubt and in search of light as anyone of you can be. And it was in the neighborhood of his church that for the first time such a resolve stirred faintly in his soul. For this reason I can say to you to-day from long experience that all the higher joy of life is contained in this petition, "Thy kingdom come."

CHAPTER V

Thy Will Be Done on Earth as It Is in Heaven

There is a fairy tale about a magic ring which transports anyone receiving it as a gift whithersoever he desires; he has only to turn the ring around three times. All of us have been given such a ring in the Lord's Prayer. We need only revolve the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer in our souls, and they will lift us up—wherever we may be, moving or at rest upon earth—high over mountain and vale into the divine world, into the highest world we can desire. This is not a mere comparison. This is the actual *feeling* of one who knows how to make use of the Lord's Prayer and these first three petitions.

But the experience which can be ours at any time in the higher world is incredibly sublime. It is like visiting the mount of the Grail. In

the words "Our Father who art in heaven" this castle of the Grail rises before us, divinely bright and tall. Then before we dare enter the castle we must first don the robes of the knights of the Grail—the utmost reverence in the presence of the holy cup—"Hallowed be thy name." Not till then we may enter the castle and behold the Grail in luminous splendor, the Grail into whose service we have been admitted—"Thy kingdom come." And now the question is put to us: "Wilt thou return into thine own world as champion of this higher world?" Thereupon we can be dubbed Knights of the Grail—"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is a genuine experience, to be had by any one of us at any time and in any place, if only we can bring these first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer really to life in our soul. And to-day, when the serious and saddening events of the moment * lie heavy on the souls of us all, and when anxiety concerning our nation and its future moves us pro-

* It was the week of the strike, at the beginning of February, 1918.

foundly, what, dear friends, is the best thing that we can do? Shall we speak about the things now actually occurring? Can we do so without long discussion of the events and their causes considered from all sides? Do not you also feel that it will be best for us to enter into the higher world? Not indeed in order to sever ourselves from this world of ours, but in order to win for ourselves in that higher world not alone the power but also the wisdom and the kindness of which we have need now more than ever, if we are to discover what we ought to do at the present time in our several positions in life.

Therefore let us summon our energies and collect our thoughts in order to make the third petition of the Lord's Prayer live in our spirit, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We will not shun the toil of allowing this petition to grow up to us, as it were, out of the history of the German mind. After our great German thinker, Kant, had spoken that memorable phrase about "the thing in itself"—that everywhere in this world a

mystery, impenetrably concealed, underlies all appearances—the question, born of the unquenchable search for truth by the spirit of man, began to arise in the minds of German thinkers: "Can this mystery not be solved nevertheless? Where is the solution to be found? In our innermost self, it may be, where we approach closest to this mystery." Then in the nineteenth century this profound answer was given; existence, in its ultimate analysis, is will. The will to live, as Schopenhauer put it. The will to power, according to Nietzsche. The will to spirit, to beauty, to creativeness, as it seemed to others. And what do we Christians say? Yes, the most mysterious, the most holy soul of the universe is will, and this will is the will to the kingdom of heaven. In this way we can attain to a new conception of Christianity which is a product of our own era. The first one to do so, and we must allow him this distinction, was Tyrell, the deeply religious Catholic reformer. Whatever may be the special concern of our existence, in any case we are aware of the will to the king-

dom of heaven underlying this existence, and we feel our whole life should be dedicated to this holy will.

Seen from this position, what is Jesus? How does his life ring out into the world. Like will devoted singly to the kingdom of heaven. The will to the kingdom of heaven has here found its human ego, in a human life and a human being which were utterly placed at its service. Or, conversely a human ego here finds the will to the kingdom of heaven, receives it in freedom, purity, and greatness as the content of his life, unites himself inwardly therewith and by word and deed makes it a living reality in the world. Anybody who has once recognized this can never overcome his amazement at the glory of this event. "Angels are strengthened as they look thereon."

Let us test Jesus to-day by comparison with three lofty utterances concerning the will which are to be found in German history. Master Eckehart, the German mystic, speaking with his unexampled audacity one day about the medieval saints said: "The inten-

tions of these saints are excellent. They wish to do God's will. We really must not withhold our praise from them. God keep them under the shadow of his mercy!" But so long as man has two wills, one with which he does the will of God, the right point has not been reached. Only one will should live in man, the will of God. We are amazed at the grandeur of this utterance. But when we look at Jesus we find it to be shining truth. It is an exact description of his activity. Not two wills, but one will; not harmony but unison. A loud declaration of allegiance to the kingdom of heaven. "Thy will be done."

We call to mind another famous utterance about the will in Kant's *Ethics*: "There is nothing conceivable in the world, or indeed outside it, which could be considered good without any limitation, save a good will." Accordingly the man who drew attention to radical evil in human nature admits that there is *one* good, namely, good will. And now look at Jesus. Where among men can we find a will so utterly and entirely good as his? Consider

his individual acts and sayings and test them as accurately as possible, from the healing of the sick to the cleansing of the temple, from the sermon on the mount to his last words. Is there anything we can find which is not a pure product of this good will? If we tap as it were the individual acts and sayings of Jesus—as men tap metal with a hammer in order to test it—no sound is heard other than the clear ring of good will to the kingdom of heaven. It is appropriate to the present age to consider the sinlessness of Jesus not by inquiring if there is not some event, perhaps occurring in his youth, in which we can find a blemish, but by testing with all the powers of our soul this pure and good will which resides in the inmost depths of his sayings and actions. "Thy will be done."

Now for a third German utterance. Nietzsche, who probably spoke about the will with greater enthusiasm than anyone else, once spoke about strong and lofty will as follows: "O Zarathustra, nothing that grows on earth is more delightful than a strong and lofty will.

It is the most beautiful thing that grows there. A whole landscape is refreshed by the presence of one such tree." Perhaps this utterance reveals the very depths of Nietzsche's experiences and longings. A strong and lofty will seemed to him to be healing for himself, and healing for the world. And Jesus? In him this strong and lofty will is not merely a tree whose presence refreshes an entire landscape; it is the tree of life, by which the whole world can be refreshed, century after century, and not only refreshed but given new life. We have only to take note how lofty his will is compared to all other objects of man's desire; how strong it is compared to all the opposition that can be brought to bear upon it by the world. "Thy will be done."

And now, having drawn this picture, let people advance with their questions. "How am I to ascertain God's will unmistakably in my own case? Many times I cannot discover it, however hard I try." Let us rejoice that we do not always know God's will at once. If we did we should forfeit our free will and become

slaves. And let us rejoice that we do not always know God's will in its entirety. If we did we should lose our courage and be driven to despair. The very fact that we must exert ourselves in spirit and not in spirit only, but in our whole being, to discover the will of God and next to understand it better, admits us into a living connection with God's will in a manner befitting human dignity, and lets us bring forth from God's will increasingly lofty aims. But if in some matter we really cannot ascertain God's will for us, let us follow the hint given us by Jesus himself. In front of the petition "Thy will be done" stands the petition "Thy kingdom come." Ask yourself what brings you, and the world, closest to the kingdom of heaven. And then you may with a quiet conscience do what comes into your mind. Our conscience is a holy of holies, but often a dark one. If we turn on the light of "Thy kingdom come" we always begin to see.

Now people come with questions from the opposite side. They say: "I know the will of God well enough; my knowledge is adequate

but not my ability. Where shall I find the power to do God's will?" It seems to me that Jesus has answered this question also in the words that follow the third petition—"on earth as it is in heaven." We can understand them in the sense of modern psychology, which teaches that will is very closely linked with feeling. For this reason man must not make use of will exercises alone in the education of children or of himself, but must inquire, "How can I make myself, how can I make the child *want* to do the things we should resolve to do?" Jesus makes us want to do God's will by the words, "on earth as it is in heaven." Even if, being men of to-day, we merely bring to mind the starry heavens when we pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," and think of the holy consistency with which the stars accomplish their task, that can be a great source of power in our daily life and work. But we can have a much greater experience than this. Let us carry out the will of God quite completely, even in some very small duty and afterwards ask ourselves how we felt

while doing so. And if we feel some touch of unearthly joy or peace, so that we feel content with whatever the day may bring forth, and as if we had been lifted out of the world to become onlookers from the outside, then let us say, "That is heaven!" Such is the peace and perfect joy that rule in the world wherever God's will is perfectly performed. And God's will is given us to the end that we should carry this earthly heaven within ourselves and be the means of bringing this heaven down upon earth. From this standpoint let us look back upon the famous controversy carried on in Germany between Kant and Schiller. "Do your duty out of pure reverence for its sacred nature," says Kant. "Do your duty," says Schiller, "because you are free and love its glory." What does Jesus say? "Thy kingdom come" thus giving his benediction to Kant, "on earth as it is in heaven" and therewith transfigures Schiller. We must learn to consider our life as something of great importance in the light of this petition. There is a piece of God's will hovering as it were over our life.

And this must be found by *us* and by nobody else. Such is our life's task. This peace of God's will hovers so to speak over every hour of our life, and it must be discovered and accomplished with all the forces of our soul and of our spirit. We are intended to live as if God were in our place and equipped with our forces for the advancement of the kingdom of heaven, so to live as is described in the words: "Father, I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." This is the height to which the third petition should lead us.

But now the will of God hovers over us in another way; not merely in the form of work to do but also as fate to be endured. Indeed when we think of "Thy will be done," Gethsemane as a rule occurs to us at once. Still it is good to saturate ourselves, to begin with, with Jesus' greatness in *carrying out* the will of God; only then will it be clear to us how great He was in *suffering* this will. We must experience the history of Jesus—the greatest event that has taken place on earth—in a large

variety of ways and repeatedly, e.g. in this fashion, as if we did not know the whole story in advance but merely as much of it as Jesus may have known himself. Then for the first time it would dawn upon us with what unclouded greatness Jesus accepted his destiny at God's hands. His fate approaches; the terrible fate of death for him who by his life had brought the light of the kingdom of heaven down to earth. His whole being trembles thereat. But he receives it and wrestles with it until he is one with it and has made it fully an act of his own free will. "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" We can experience the death of Jesus in another way, if in some bitter lot of our own we listen to this wonderful saying of Jesus with our whole soul, as if it were a saying quite our own, issuing from ourselves. The world's cleverness allies itself with evil against him, in order to put him to death in a shameful manner. But he merely says, "My Father." Events all combine into a terrible supremacy of human power and doom. But he says, quite

simply, "My Father giveth." Terrible and cruel anguish draws near him. Yet he only sees, quite simply, the cup in the Father's hand. Have we ever, if only once, felt how divinely splendid this was? For thousands of years man has struggled with destiny, but never has anybody fought such a luminous battle against destiny and won it, as did Jesus. How faulty was the vision of those who imagine themselves to have detected weakness and weariness of life and longing for death in Jesus. On the contrary, what is all the defiance of Prometheus compared with the pure and great nobility of soul, with which one man here transformed the heaviest doom into an act of free will! Yes, an act of his free will; for as Jesus in carrying out the will of God was quite free from fanaticism, which robbed the others of their free will, so in suffering the will of God was he quite free from fatalism, which would prevent the accomplishment of his own free will. I will! Nothing befalls me save what is *my will.*

We do not know, dear friends, the treasure

we possess in this picture. We do not know what an immeasurable and inexhaustible boon God has here granted us. If we did we should be purified by our destiny for all eternity. Our experience would be not unlike that which Aristotle, speaking from the age long mystery-wisdom, said concerning Greek tragedy, and of which we once said that it expresses the deepest experience of this war as well. It is also a prophecy of Christ, this saying of Aristotle that tragedy by arousing fear and pity purifies these emotions in man. If we enter deeply ourselves into the passion of Jesus, we are overcome by a holy awe of the one who sent this doom, and can observe how our soul is released from all other fear of fate and of man and of death, and nothing remains save pure reverence. And we are overcome by deep compassion for him who suffered this fate, and can observe how thereby we overcome all false love of the world and of ourselves, and how a new love for the world and for humanity springs to life. We are purified into reverence and love.

Let us also stand in front of this picture with the questions men commonly ask concerning destiny. We know that when a heavy burden is laid on us this question often arises in our soul: "Is this affliction really sent by God? Is it not the result of chance, or a fatality, or the work of evil men?" And then let us turn our eyes on Jesus and note how far he rose above any doubt of this kind and how right he was in so doing. Another question, too, is apt to make us miserable, viz. "Why has God done this to me? What have I done to deserve it?" And then let us turn our eyes on Jesus and see how untouched he was by such emotions as these and how well it was for him to be so. What other reason can there be for this story being made known to us than to assure us that nothing can happen to us under any circumstances and to all eternity than God's will. So entirely God's will that we should have willed it for ourselves just as it occurs were we as wise as God, and did we think as God thinks and feel as kindly to ourselves as God does! Deep fear and

trembling in the face of our destiny has of course been justified by Gethsemane. But equally have the highest hopes and faith for the outcome of destiny been encouraged and hallowed by Golgotha. Ever, as in the case of Jesus, does the one-half of our destiny abide wholly in ourselves—that, namely, which happens within us—and the other half abide continually in God—that, namely, which takes place outside of us. But with this petition "Thy will be done" we cross over and unite ourselves with God and how could we unite ourselves with him if we had no immediately impending destiny?—become utterly one with him and thus bring heaven down to earth? For what does Dante make the saints say in his immortal poem? "The will of God is our peace." And we can experience this peace of the saints, this music from heaven, at any time when we can encounter any trial in our lives with the heartfelt words "Thy will be done." And anybody who has done this, were it but once in a lifetime, carries a bit of heaven in his heart which can never be taken away from him.

We can hardly think of this petition without being reminded of a superb poem of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer where God the Creator before entering upon His activities, assembles His spirits:

"Ere I give you leave to scatter,"
Spake to them the Omnipotent One,
"Swear, ye angels; swear, ye devils,
My will only shall be done."
Sang the angels with rejoicing,
"Ours thy bidding to fulfill."
And the demons, the destroyers,
The undoers snarled—"We will."

Let us over and over again face this final and decisive choice. There is no alternative. Either we are *compelled* to do the will of God, or we do it *willingly*. We may be used up by God's will as tools of some kind in the carrying out of evolution against our own will, or we may ascend in God's will to the sun-realms of divine freedom and divine peace.

Sang the angels with rejoicing,
"Ours thy bidding to fulfill!"

CHAPTER VI

Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

Professor Class, our old philosophy teacher, advised us during our student years to rise up to the level of every work of art by three stages. We were told to begin by letting it speak to us as a whole, then in all its individual details, and finally once more as a whole, now enriched with a deeper understanding. This advice was brought back to my mind by these weeks of communion with one another concerning the Lord's Prayer. All of us have of course valued and loved the Lord's Prayer. Now we have made up our minds to consider its individual details so far as these few hours allow us to hint at its profound and glorious content. But the conclusion of this study is to lead to its becoming more alive and active as a whole both in our church service and in our daily life.

Among all the petitions of the Lord's Prayer there is perhaps none that can be considered a little individual work of art so well as this fourth petition. To begin with, it is little short of amazing to find Jesus descending from heaven to earth—from the third to the fourth petitions—with such simplicity and freedom and power. And then his manner of speaking about earthly needs is so concise, but so inexhaustible in its wealth, so indescribable in its purity. Every word resembles a placid lake; its surface does not reveal much, but if one dives down into its depth one finds a golden cup there.

Yet, have we not been told that the attitude of Jesus toward life, as exemplified for instance in this fourth petition, is out of tune with our age? That our civilization has advanced far beyond this carefree and childlike mind of Jesus? The truth is precisely the reverse. There is nothing of which our age stands more in need than of this fourth petition. It contains the living seeds of the various civilizations we need, seeing that our own—

we may as well confess the fact—has hitherto proved inadequate. Only recently I read a few lines written by an eminent man particularly well acquainted with our modern conditions, which in four foreign words outlined for me the miserable condition of our modern civilization. This is what he wrote: Our "materialistic-mechanistic-capitalistic-imperialistic" civilization. What does the fourth petition have to say about this?

"Materialistic." Materialism as a philosophy is not the aspect which mainly concerns us, seeing that most people decline to accept it, but rather materialism in daily life, of which almost every one, even in the most religious circles, makes much more use than he is aware of doing, in the form of overvaluation of that which is external, visible, and tangible as compared with that which is inward, hidden, and divine. We can be agreed that we men of to-day are making astounding technical improvements all the time by means of our discoveries and inventions. But we do not know how to live. We resemble a group of stone

masons bestowing much skill and energy upon the construction of a country residence which they will never occupy themselves. Another and future humanity will be the owners and dwell there while we shall have inhaled death along with the dust of our work. Am I exaggerating? Just look at the alarming increase of mental diseases in mankind, especially among those who are used up by the industries. There we have materialism unmasked! Mind and soul collapse at the very time we accomplish such grand and glorious works in the outer world.

How marvelously free, in comparison, is the position of Jesus in the world! "Give us this day our daily bread." Just consider: He who lives for God with every breath he draws, whose mission it is to conquer the world for God, prays to God for mere bread for the coming day, disregarding all earth's glory and riches. This is a picture whose importance for us cannot be overestimated. Its greatness and purity appear to us even more clearly if we set up two great Christians alongside of it, Luther

and St. Francis. Luther, in commenting upon the fourth petition speaks of "good friends, loyal neighbors, and such things." All of which are valuable and important forms of our daily bread. But Jesus is much greater when he touches the earth with one phrase only "Our daily bread." And this glory is revealed once more from the other side when we see how scrupulously Jesus withheld from all playing with poverty, even such noble play as that of St. Francis of Assisi speaking of "Madonna Poverta," his dear lady Poverty. Jesus neither invested begging with sanctity nor bread with self-indulgence. Let us now try to breathe the air of amazing reserve toward the world which this fourth petition contains. We need only attempt to approach Jesus with such a question as: "Were you never aggrieved by the injustice of fate when you saw how much better off Herod was than you?" Jesus prays for daily bread, takes it, eats it, and is content. Or rather, the words "content," "satisfied," do not apply to him at all. He is free.

Can we live thus to-day? When the events

of the past few years produce their effects in our social life, and when the mode of living of many of us must be retrenched for ever, there can be nothing more appropriate, nothing more beneficial than this petition. Only we must continue to bear in mind the places where the greatest achievements of German history have been wrought: Luther's bare cloister cell, Bach's humble abode, Kant's homely study, the Goethe House, yet not its sumptuous main apartments, but rather the simple workroom at the back. There is plenty to think about there. But putting all such considerations aside—let us make a vivid picture in our minds of a man who really desires nothing further from the whole world than a bit of bread, enough to live on and to work. How lofty and noble a dignity of manhood is here displayed. And it is this exquisite sensibility for human dignity, dependent on no external aids for its existence, that the fourth petition is intended to awaken in us. Compared therewith how unworthy is all preoccupation with eating, drinking, and enjoyment, how dishonoring to

both men and women. If the inner substance of the fourth petition were living in our people to-day, how light and easy would be the task of triumphing over the tribulations of the present period. With what amazing speed we should become rich again, using our riches not for worthless luxury but for the innermost advance of humanity. Or still more, we *are* rich on the very day on which we begin to take this petition in earnest. For the same may be said about this royal petition of Jesus as was once said to Solomon in answer to his prayer: "Because thou hast asked this thing and hast not asked for thyself long life neither hast asked riches for thyself. . . . I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days." Royal riches abide in this petition, inasmuch as royal freedom abides in it, the freedom which arises in a royal soul.

But our civilization—this is the second point—has become godless. This is a hard thing to say, yet it must be said. What has to be taken

into consideration is not so much whether an individual here and there still believes in God but preëminently whether God is a living factor in our lives. Man of to-day, when he sees a good loaf of bread, is much more likely to think of the most approved agricultural methods, or of the newest type of fertilizer, than to think living thoughts about God. We only have to look at our men of science, who cannot be content until they have explained a thing mechanically, but who are content when they have done so. An effort is being made at present to explain the world mechanistically, on the vastest cosmic scale, as a great machine. Yet warnings already begin to issue from strange sources, not alone theological ones. For instance, only recently a well known nerve specialist who favors psycho-analysis came out with a terse remark to the effect that man must believe in something divine, for if he does not his reason will be permanently injured; yet he cannot have a belief in God and remain true to himself since God does not exist. What a light such phrases cast upon our present era! And

now let us turn to Jesus and see in what relation he stands to the world. Although the only thing of all earth's glories that he needs is a bit of bread, yet he begs it from God and accepts it with gratitude as a direct gift from his heavenly Father. He knows that the sower sows the seed and that the reaper gathers the harvest, but his concern is with the Father alone. There is nothing standing between him and his Father when he takes his daily bread and breaks it, even as there is nothing standing between them when he takes the cup of death and drinks it. In His eyes food and drink are merely converse with God. The Father greets his child in the gift, and in the enjoyment of it the child greets his Father. We must learn to appreciate the utter nobility of this cosmic attitude of Jesus, which is so free from any servile submission. When a Roman artist once desired to delineate the whole external nobility of the human figure he portrayed a youth praying to heaven with upturned face. We see the much more exalted inner counterpart to this picture

in the petition, "*Give* us this day our daily bread."

But does not natural science, which teaches us to behold laws upon laws everywhere, forbid us to do this? Let us make answer to-day merely by a comparison. Modern science only shows us that God's arm is longer than we had imagined; nothing more than this. But our eyes are not as yet adjusted to look beyond the arm to the Giver of gifts, otherwise we could even to-day stand once more like children before our Father. Even as all the sober calculations of the astronomers, about which we spoke recently, contain a wonderful hymn of praise to the might and glory of God, so do all the cold laws of the scientists contain an overpowering revelation of divine truth and goodness. What we need is poets who can make us feel all this, even as once upon a time poets taught mankind the divinity of sowing and reaping. No change need be made in our knowledge, merely a change in our feeling concerning our knowledge. Once upon a time as

the Italian Vanini was being led to the place of execution after having been accused of denying the existence of God, we are told that he picked up a straw and said: "If I had no other proof of God's existence than this straw, it would suffice." Therefore nothing speaks *against* God, but everything speaks *of* God as soon as our minds are opened up. At every meal the lower form of earthly enjoyment is expressed by the body as it tastes the goodness of the gift, and the higher form by the soul as it realizes the goodness of the Giver. How happy a place our earth could be! And what opportunities for joy each day could offer! "The whole creation tastes of grace," as Spurgeon, the English preacher, once said. What a task for our lives and also for our thoughts lies in these words. Everything becomes a sacrament, a stately yet joyful sacrament, the union of our lives with God in the purest spiritual gratitude and devotion, for the individual who tries to offer up this petition aright: "*Give* us this day our daily bread."

If we now go on to comment on our

"capitalistic" era, the thought in our minds is not capitalism in its industrial significance but rather that quality of which it is so often the expression, the quality which makes it actively harmful, viz. egoism. And it is not merchants alone we have in mind. Rather is it . . . but let me tell a story. During the war I was looking out of a window one day at a flock of sparrows. Each one was doing its best in the most outrageous way to take a bit of bread away from its neighbor. And suddenly I remembered all the things I had heard on that selfsame day of events taking place in our dear German Fatherland.

Such impressions as these must be our starting point in our endeavor to realize the fourth petition. "Give *us* our daily bread." How clean the atmosphere into which we enter with the word *us!* The fact that the Lord's Prayer is a congregational supplication is not the only reason for the presence of the word *us.* There is an inner elevation of mind which makes it frankly impossible for a person to say—"Give *me*"—where daily bread is con-

cerned. Certainly Jesus could not enter his Father's presence without feeling in his heart —my brothers also need bread. We are told that Buddha would sometimes, in quiet contemplation, radiate his kindness to the four quarters of the globe. But here the shining light of divine kindness radiates a more living glow over the whole earth and over all its inhabitants: "Give *us* this day our daily bread." This is a new feeling in human life, and any one who allows the Lord's Prayer to teach him that he simply cannot enter God's presence without bringing his brothers with him, will also feel that we are in fact praying here for a new era, and not necessarily socialism in its economic form but something much higher. For if we have accorded our brother a place in our prayers we cannot possibly deny him a place in our lives. Our heart unlocks itself in the act of according and of giving. Really human civilization commences at this point; the previous stages were mere barbarism. It put us Europeans to shame that a Chinese should come and say to us during the war: "Now you

Europeans can see what your doctrine of freedom has led to. Yon must couple with it a very different rule of life, which we are taught in China, the law of loyalty." Must a Chinese come and tell us something we could have learned from Jesus, something we can find every day in the Lord's Prayer? Give *us* our daily bread. There we have the law of loyalty! So practical was Jesus in his teaching of love that he impressed it on us first of all in the Lord's Prayer in connection with daily bread.

A hundred years ago, during the Napoleonic wars a famous preacher, Klaus Harms, preached a sermon against three types of men, against those who stretch out their hands to seize their country's natural resources, against those who refuse to shoulder their country's burdens, and against those who shut their eyes on both types of offenders. "Ah!" you will say, "so they had the same troubles during the Napoleonic wars as we are having to-day!" But we prefer to depict the beautiful counterpart to these words which portrays the type of coöperation which Jesus

is minded to attract through the Lord's Prayer, viz. men whose eyes are open for others' needs, whose shoulders are ready to bear the burdens of others and whose hands are ever ready to help. Give *us* our daily bread.

There is one phrase still left to consider—*this day.* If we imagine the fourth petition without this particular application I believe we should all feel that the most beautiful part of it had been omitted. Man comes down to dwell on earth but for a day, then he returns to God again, to be sent back to this earth afresh. If we enter the depths of this implication we can hardly determine which ought to please us most, the entire reserve toward God which allows the to-morrow to take complete care, in God's hand, for the things of itself, or the proud assurance which requires no security for the morrow since it has such complete trust in God, or the quiet confidence which feels itself above all care, or the native loftiness of mind which leaves itself free to consider much higher things. Whenever a reformer arises at the present day, his first question is: "Where can I

find a benefactor who will provide me with an income, so that I can devote myself to my plans without anxiety?" Jesus "hath not where to lay his head"—and redeems the world!

But is it possible for man still to live thus to-day? To this our reply would have to be "No," if this petition means that we should make no preparations *for* the morrow. But since it says that we are not to be concerned *about* to-morrow we reply "Yes." Not only do we reply "Yes" but we go further and add that it would be the ideal remedy for innumerable ills of our era. A short while ago we called attention to a little word of evil reputation, "imperialistic." Is our civilization imperialistic? It is far more so than most people even suspect. Such a philosophy as Nietzsche's will to power could not have been conceived without a background of reality on which it is recorded. But it is not the British-American brand of imperialism about which we are now thinking, nor the Russian, nor the German, but merely the whole trend of the times. Everybody is trying to better himself,

to secure himself as far into the future as possible. The merchant, the workingman, and even the civil service employee are apt to be imperialists on a miniature scale, anxious to conquer a small realm for themselves on earth. Well, is that a very wrong thing to do? If we take the phrase "this day" in the fourth petition earnestly to heart we shall begin to detect where the wrong begins. For this phrase detaches us just enough from earth to prevent us from being harmful to others as we strive to take root ourselves. This phrase kills "attachment," as the Indians call it, within us, the attachment to earthly things. It does not take away our ability to use the earth for our purposes, but it does remove the selfish desires with which we encumber it.

Oh, if men only knew the *joy* radiating from the words, "Give us *this day* our daily bread!" Anybody who utters it from his heart is determined not to entangle himself in earth life any more than is necessary to execute his earthly duties with scrupulous care, for he reserves to

himself a lordly right to accept the morrow afresh at God's hand. Such a man will not allow "the adventure of life" to molder away; though we prefer the expression "the marvel of life," the marvel that is renewed day by day.

If men only knew the *consecration* that is bestowed by this phrase! Those of us who are bowed down to earth by our toil are raised up again by the word *daily* to receive a greeting from our eternal destination, a greeting from our home on high. That sublime phrase of Fichte's, "The world is the material of our duty in terms of things," though it is not less sublime is less illuminating than the admonition which greets us in the word *daily.* The world awakens anew every day as a place to which we have been sent by God. "Give us this day our *daily* bread!"

Do we now begin to scent the fragrance of a new world blowing toward us from this petition? Jesus only utters seven words about earthly life in the Lord's Prayer, but these seven words suffice to establish in us an entirely new relation to earthly things. We are freed

from the *overmuch*—"our daily bread," freed from *external things*—"Give," freed from our own *self*—"us," freed from earthly things—"this day." All this liberation and salvation lies slumbering in this sentence. Our lives are to be lived in freedom, gratitude, kindness, and sublimity. What an exalted and radiant mankind is portrayed by this fourth petition! Compared with this picture how heavy laden are the men of to-day! This petition looks as if it were a mere prayer for daily bread. What is it in reality? A prayer for the kingdom of heaven. Nay more, a gift of the kingdom of heaven. The words resemble cups of gold out of which we can daily drink the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER VII

Forgive Us Our Debts as We Forgive Our Debtors

When Goethe was seventy years old he exclaimed, while talking to Chancellor Müller: "How can one live without bestowing absolution upon oneself and others every night?" That saying, which embodies the rich experience of a life filled with wisdom gives us an idea of what Jesus means by the fifth petition. Goethe of course gives us only the merest idea of the subject, for to be really in tune with the meaning of Jesus his words would have had to run: "How *would* people live if they gave themselves and others a daily absolution from God; still more if they allowed the fullness of God's grace to be bestowed upon them."

We see most deeply into this subject by looking at Jesus himself. This would be another profitable way of reading the Bible, viz. to take the four Gospels, or one of them, and

read it through with this question in our hearts: "What is Jesus' attitude toward sinners? What does He say about sin?" Wonderful experiences might befall one. Perhaps you would feel as I do. There are not many people to whom I can listen when they talk about sin, but I can always listen to him. For in him two qualities are conjoined: on the one hand the most sensitive perception for purity and sanctity, down to the very depths of the soul—we need only remember what he said about adultery—and on the other the unique and marvelous outflowing of his heart toward those oppressed by a sense of guilt—here we need only to bring to mind the parable of the Prodigal Son. On the one side he makes an unsurpassable and drastic demand for the highest morality—"if thy right eye offend thee pluck it out and cast it from thee"—and on the other displays a wonderful tenderness in his treatment of sinners—Zacchæus, Peter, and the woman taken in adultery. There is no more sacred or blessed way to learn than to be taught by his nature and by his life.

And how we benefit by listening to him speak about sin! He displays none of the gloom of the medieval clamor for penitence, but still less of modern smiling levity. There is not, in his talks about sin, a trace of the vulgarity which once appeared in our German treatment of the subject, though it must be allowed that this happened at a time when literary taste had also reached its lowest point. But there is nothing of that obtrusiveness either, which came over to us later from England and which was bent upon hectoring and even terrifying people till they fell upon their knees and confessed their sins. Jesus spoke about the kingdom of heaven in lofty and joyous words. He entreated people in serious and impressive terms to listen to what he had to say about the kingdom of heaven. But after doing so he waited with imperturbable reserve in the clear bright light of the kingdom of heaven until men set about going to their Father themselves. It might occur after a particularly gracious experience, such as befell Zacchæus and Peter, and then his

deep joy and heavenly kindness burst forth in thrilling fashion. He did not say: "Ye are altogether abominable in the eyes of God." What he did say was: "Be perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect"! This proudest of all human sayings, this patent of nobility for all mankind we owe to him and to no one else. Nor did he say: "Ye will all be damned if ye do not repent of your sins." What He did say was: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." He fed men with light; he himself was their light. And the Lord's Prayer is constructed in this very way. It begins with clear sunshine during the first three petitions up in heaven above and the fourth on earth below. But then, in the fifth petition, man determines to arise and go to his Father, not with a long winded confession of sins, not with bitter self-accusation, but with a short and serious phrase of deep import: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors!"

But can we speak to men of to-day any longer about such things as sin and debt? The

sharpest opposition arises on two sides. Let us hear the objections of philosophy, to begin with. Have we not learned to inquire for causes everywhere? Can an individual act otherwise than he does? Taking into account temperament, education, environment, circumstances, can he be called a free agent? Is not sin destiny? We are confronted by one of the greatest riddles of human life, and nothing is further from my thoughts than to deal with it lightly. However, we are entitled to make one statement, and anyone who has made a serious study of these questions will have no difficulty in understanding my position. Whatever rôle causality and determinism may play, man as an ego can step outside of this kingdom of cause and effect, and as an ego he can step across into another and higher realm. He can face God directly and say: "I am not the man I ought to be." This sacred truth will always find a way of disclosing itself to man. People who object to hear this sort of thing from the pulpit can read it in the Orestes of Æschylus. In the entire literature of the world there is

scarcely to be found a more profoundly moving episode than the horror of Orestes at having slain his mother, even though he has been exonerated by his friend, by the chorus, and finally by the oracle. Nevertheless the might and majesty of a higher truth overbear these excuses. "I am guilty," he says, "I cannot beat down the conviction in my soul that I am guilty."

The second type of opposition is advanced, not by philosophy in the form of determinism but by ethics in the form of optimism. Is not this lamentation about guilt unhealthy, unnatural, unworthy, untrue? "Did I come into this world only to involve myself perpetually, though innocently, in guilt?" is one of the sentences which Goethe when a young man, wrote in his diary. Isn't Nietzsche right after all, when he says that a healthy mind digests sin just as easily as a healthy stomach digests brick cheese? Here too we will be advised by the great writer and not by the clergyman. Any one of you who knows Tolstoi's *Power of Darkness* will remember the poor peasant

Nikita girding himself up to make confession, girding himself up to do so in spite of his appalling environment and to accept freely the consequences of his act, while old Akin inscribes magic circles around him, as it were, in order that no one may hinder what he calls "the work of God." There we have a picture of the splendid and indescribable dignity endued by man when he really assumes responsibility for his actions.

"Forgive us our debts." We have had a most instructive demonstration of the exalted truth and the sacred dignity of this petition from the works of two great though very different writers. And so we are brought near to an answer to that age long query of humanity, "Why is there evil in the world? How can God permit sin?"

> Ye cause poor mortals to offend from birth;
> And then you leave them to reap bitter woe
> Since all offence must be atoned on earth.

What the poet says is true—at least it is a half truth, or less. It leads us to the dark

tunnel only, not into the glorious sunlight awaiting us at the other end. Were it not for guilt I should never learn to know God in the full majesty of his holiness. Such is the half conjectured answer given by Orestes in the ancient tragedy. And ask yourselves if the glorious starry vault proclaims the majesty of God to us as clearly as does the voice speaking from within ourselves. Were it not for guilt I should never unite myself with God in my inmost being. Thus runs the answer given us by Nikita in the stumbling words of modern drama. And ask yourselves whether all delight in the entrancing beauties of nature unites our inner being to God as closely as does the moment when our ego arises as a witness against us and makes for God. We could find God in a sinless world, but our knowledge of him would not be so clear nor our free devotion to him so great. That is the meaning of sin, and the blessing in it.

What conclusions are we to draw from these facts? Certainly not to allow ourselves to be driven into avowing an emotion which we do

not feel; we must learn to be truthful in our own despite. Certainly not to hunt for dark places in our lives and never to lose sight of them; we must rise to a very deep sense of the nature of God.

And the most recent teachings of psychology give us food for very serious thought. We are told that one heedless remark of ours made to a growing boy or girl, e.g. "You will never make a success of life," may keep on living and growing within them and may contribute to their losing their grip in later life and committing suicide. We are told that one hidden and unclean desire that has not been overcome by our inner self may keep on living and causing damage within us that may lead to our becoming insane in later life. If this is indeed true how instantly it behooves us as Christians to carry these thoughts over into the other world in which we believe. Else we shall carry dark spots in our souls, places unilluminated by God's light, over into eternity with us, where they will be like a mass of embers from which destructive flame may, nay must burst

forth, as soon as the soul's preceptions become keener. And this is the case in the land of truth where many things can no longer be glossed over, and where the soul in its own land must abide by its own laws. Now look at the saying, "Whoso judgeth himself cometh not into judgment." It is not good advice to tell anyone not to bother about the past, but Jesus advises us well when he tells us to let God lighten our darkness. We may still have to behold in the other world the external consequences of our offenses, and endure their inner results, but nevertheless it is true to all eternity, as the poet says, that:

The whirlwind may howl and the tempest may roar,
But the heart in my breast is at peace evermore.

It is impossible to use too great gentleness in speaking about this subject. Let us some time use this fifth petition as our warrant for devoting a quiet moment to the consideration of the worst offense we have personally been guilty of. Let us make no attempt to excuse ourselves or to diminish the seriousness of the of-

fense, but simply lower our guilt into the depths of the divine mercy, and say, "I will set aside this evil which my wretched self has brought about, and will make a fresh start relying entirely upon God's goodness, freely offered to us all." And how does Christ enter in here? We will just hint at this in a picture. Let us suppose we are in the presence of somebody we esteem very highly and to whom we have to confess we have done wrong. Our eyes look up into his eyes. And if we see kindness there beaming into ours, our heart becomes light and free. This marvelous expression of God's goodness is—the Christ! That is his life and his nature. We need only call to mind the things we have already been told about Jesus. In him we have the countenance of God turned toward us whence his unfathomable goodness radiates. How could Jesus be what he is if God were not like him? Let us revert once more to the moment when we have to confess wrongdoing to someone we esteem very greatly. There is such a thing as a friendly expression, but that would be of no help at

such a moment. Comprehension must be there too, complete understanding of the seriousness of the matter in hand. This seriousness, this extreme seriousness, at the heart of God's goodness is—the death of Jesus. I can entrust all my guilt to this goodness of God which led Christ to suffer death! In this manner we can experience the death of Christ very delicately and yet very deeply, without calling upon the help of any dogmatic theories, though they have their own justification also. Yet anyone uniting with God in this fashion will begin to feel such a complete and unclouded sense of gratitude as he has never experienced before; and this utterly pure, spiritual, and complete gratitude will result in a marvelously glad and lofty enjoyment of life. This it is that makes us understand Luther and realize how this attitude to life gave him the power and ability to do anything and to suffer anything. What sort of a conception of this have those objectors who find in Christian teaching of "grace" a suspicious reference to Oriental despotism? None at all, for in this way alone does man be-

come free, by learning to rely, down to the very inmost part of himself, no longer upon himself but upon God. And not till then does man attain happiness, since the highest attainable happiness, viz. God and his goodness, now becomes our own joy in life. People have said that some religions are born of fear, and some of joy; this religion of complete gratitude unites the deepest reverence with the height of joy. There is none other than God to whom we would wish to be under an obligation of unlimited and exclusive gratitude. On the other hand there is no other relation to God which is as real and as satisfying as this. Listen to St. Augustine, "No more will I be my own life; so long as I was, I was mine own death; in Thee I will find new life!"

And it was this purest, most spiritual, and most perfect gratitude to God which Jesus desired to establish as the basic substance of our relations with one another. And I believe that up till now hardly anyone has had even a faint idea of this gift of his to mankind. Let us just imagine living in our own home, if only for a

single day, in this basic mood of utter unlimited gratitude to God, who is ever kind to us without ceasing, despite our unworthiness. Imagine all our actions and words springing up out of this gratitude, so that it becomes a real joy to have something to forgive. Then we can begin to conceive how humanity could be illuminated and warmed by Christ, and how this will actually come to pass either in this world or another.

And how about ourselves? In earlier days the qualifying phrase of this fifth petition—"as we forgive our debtors"—used always to remind me of the stone lying on the fairy bridge, on which is inscribed, "All liars trip up on me." Even so has Jesus, as it were, deposited such a stone in the middle of the Lord's Prayer, over which anyone must stumble who attempts to carry a heart full of revenge and bitterness across it. How keenly must he have felt the importance of complete reconciliation among mankind! And how little is this felt by them, even the section of them that uses the Lord's

Prayer. Yet it is not a stone of offense, no, it is a royal crown, and we are meant to pick it up. Consider, this is the very deep and divine element in this fifth petition. In the very instant in which we feel annihilated by our condition—"Forgive us our debts"—we are given a chance to perform an action, and moreover one of the most exalted ones, viz. to forgive our brother his debts with our whole heart. We are to become a collaborator with God in his inmost and most exalted activity, that of forgiveness. But we must really bring our debtor to mind. We must bring the person who has hurt us most during our life before us in spirit and say to ourselves, "This is the person by whom I can prove that I am a godlike man, a follower of Jesus. God has—I was just about to say—made me a present of this person, in order that I might have an opportunity of carrying out the divine work of forgiveness upon him!" Our public relations with him may be regulated by the qualifying effects of expediency, or better still of wisdom, upon love.

But within ourselves we must be able to regard him *absolutely* in a friendly way without any reservations whatsoever.

We spoke a little while ago of the dark places in our soul which we cannot be allowed to take up with us into eternity. Who knows if such an unilluminated, unreconciliated spot in our hearts does not in the next world send up something like clouds which really darken the sunshine of God's goodness over us? Was this, perhaps, the meaning of those words of Jesus concerning reconciliation: "So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts." Many eminent Christians have had a similar feeling, e.g. Tolstoi, who says: "Whoever really knows God will not find it necessary to forgive his brother, he will only have to forgive himself for not having forgiven earlier." It is not solely on account of our neighbor that we forgive, nor solely on God's account; we forgive on our own account because we look upon it as a kind of utter cleansing not to harbor anything ungodlike or irreconcilable within us.

"If I am to repay you at all it must be with love, for I have and am naught else." When old Frommel was asked if he never took offense at anything, he would reply, "There is so much offense in the world anyhow that there is no need for taking more." Similarly we might speak about bearing grudges and say: "Everybody has so many burdens to bear anyhow that there is no need to bear a grudge against anybody for his offenses." I may help him carry his burden, but not bear him a grudge. The grudge that I bear against another is none the less something that I have to bear myself. Instead of this I ought to be bearing something much more full of joy and light, I who am supposed to be a Christopher, a bearer of Christ.

Having reached this attitude of mind let us listen to the argument we hear so frequently to-day to the effect that hate is a healthy and natural reaction of strong men. I have read a sentence which ran: "I am of one mind with Bismarck, who said 'I spent the whole of last night once again in active hate.' " Or consider

a sentence which appeared recently in a newspaper of high reputation: "And now abideth faith, hope and hate, these three, but the greatest among them is hate!" The only people who can preach hate in such a manner are people into whose souls has fallen no single ray of the real power and greatness which belong to actual forgiveness, no ray of a highest revelation of humanity, that divine humanity which speaks to us in the words of Christ on the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." No indeed, after reading these words from the cross we feel that anyone who has not had occasion to pardon a great offense at least once in his life and made good use of it, has been denied the experience of the highest and most heavenly act man can perform upon earth, viz. forgive!

And now let us sum up the message the fifth petition holds for us. Our dear German philosopher Jacob Boehme once noticed a tin vessel in his workshop mirroring the glory of the sun. Perhaps it was the greatest experience of his life. And at that moment he believed himself

to have looked into the mystery of the world. We will not inquire in what manner he interpreted the sight; but do we not have the same experience every time we take the fifth petition in earnest? We are the tin vessel. The sunlight is the divine grace. We do not receive it from above, we are transformed by this light. We become light of this light and radiate this light into the world. Our life is meant to be a greeting which divine love sends to our fellow men. In very truth this is the mystery of the world, the mystery of God.

CHAPTER VIII

Lead Us Not into Temptation

A number of us met together one evening for a religious discussion, and I well recollect a man of broad and sensitive nature who spoke on that occasion. In rough and excited language he charged God with concealing himself from men and besetting them in their lives with grievous trials which they could find no way of surmounting. The whole gathering was rather stunned by his words and the effect they produced. I should scarcely have found the right words and above all the right spirit for my answer as quickly as I did had not chance —and yet of course it was not chance—brought under my eyes a passage from Master Eckehart's writings on my way to the meeting. "I once knew a nobleman," relates Master Eckehart, "who was wont, after adding a new servant to his retinue, to send him out at night,

and then ride after him and fight with him. And it so happened, at one time, that he was nearly killed by one whom he was putting to the proof in this manner. And ever after did he hold this fellow in high esteem." The meaning of this story is probably clear to us all. The nobleman is God. The nocturnal combat is temptation. And the servant is the man who resolutely defends himself against attack, even if he fails to recognize at first that it is God himself who is putting him to the proof. Verily, God can endure man's reproaches and questionings as long as man fights a hard and honest and brave battle with the forces he has to encounter. Is there any nobler, truer, loftier or more open fashion of speaking about temptation than this?

But how does it harmonize with our sixth petition, "Lead us not into temptation?" That is the kind of question which rises instantly to the lips of man to-day. "Is it not the *will* of God," he inquires, "that we should be tempted? Does he not lead us into temptation for our own good? How then can I pray, Lead us not

into temptation?" All such argumentation is like taking one of the prophets of old and putting him through a modern classroom examination. But it is far better to learn to recognize the prophet's soul. Thus considered we find the sixth petition to have a soul, a marvelously tender and profound soul, viz. the shrinking from temptation and taking refuge with God. Anyone who has really comprehended this sixth petition knows that it cannot be expressed otherwise if it is to voice in utterly concise, strong, and stainless terms those two events, the real shrinking from temptation and the taking final refuge with God.

Of course this petition is very far removed from the spirit of our age. What is modern man afraid of? He fears bacilli, not desires; infection, not temptation. In those days men were ready to encounter the severest forms of temptation, even death, on behalf of their faith. But is this any reason why we should call the sixth petition antiquated? Let us open our own eyes to behold the world of temptations which surrounds us.

How much temptation arises from the fact of our having a body as well as a soul! St. Francis was in a habit of calling his body playfully "brother ass." And he certainly did not say so as a term of contempt; he was far too fond of animals for that. Anyone who takes a serious view of life's daily struggles, let us say with laziness and a desire for personal comfort, and realizes the constant need of stirring brother ass up so that he will not merely jog along but give the best possible service, can easily conjecture what St. Francis had in mind. Or anyone who has become aware how many petulant words—to take another case—he has spoken simply because his body was ailing owing to his own negligence, and how much of life has been spoiled for ourselves and others in this way can get an idea of the number of balky tricks brother ass is up to every day. On the other hand let us consider how much a skilled trainer of animals can get out of a horse, let us say, by insistence coupled with consideration and by relentless wisdom. We ought to treat our bodies so that they will

be ready at all times to do their utmost in the service of mankind. People laugh to-day at medieval asceticism. Let us admit that its forms were clumsy, made to order and coarse. But the people of that day did at least see something to which we are blind, the task of making brother ass into as willing and competent a life partner as may be, seeing that we have got to ride him. I have an idea that our young people are getting a better appreciation of this task. This is the reason why they are seeking advice from diet specialists and physical culturists and experts in life. They wish to discover how to protect themselves against their bodies and how to rule them wisely. It is borne in upon them that their bodies were given them to generate power, especially as much spiritual power as possible. But alas! alas! how many teachers do they not find who have no better advice to give than quiet acquiescence in all brother ass's whims and impulses? The sigh of St. Paul breathes to us a tragic and grievous page of human history: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit." If our

natures were sensitive enough we should give the most serious heed to the sixth petition. On the other hand, the object of the sixth petition is precisely the arousing of this sensitiveness in us!

Mankind is well aware of what happens to those who do not pay heed. The figure of Don Juan, for instance, stalks through the literature of all peoples and all ages as a warning conceived and fashioned by the deeper conscience of man for his own protection. When we read how Don Juan, who is only interested in bodily enjoyment of life, invites death to be his guest; when we read that the marble statue, instead of staying away, really appears and sits down at the gleaming board—at which he is the least welcome of guests—our soul has a human allegory of profound significance presented to it. At every moment when we live in the body rather than in the spirit we are inviting death to dine with us. Loneliness, boredom, moodiness, weariness of life, which cannot be avoided if we give too much time in our lives to the pleasures of the table, for instance,

are one form of the marble statue; our soul is commencing to die. Yes indeed, and if we have a brand of philosophy to-day which does not concern itself with the hereafter, why is this? The reason is that mankind has concerned itself too much with externals, has applied itself too much to material ambitions during the past century. This philosophy of death—for it is nothing else—is the marble statue whom we ourselves have invited to our banquet. We may learn a great deal by looking at the stories of the temptation, as they appear in the Gospels, in such an attitude of mind as this. What is the first of the temptations of Jesus? "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." This is the solitary temptation in which the body of Jesus is urged to war against the spirit, that we find in the Gospel, this desire for a piece of bread. Now let us endeavor to realize, to begin with, the wonderful nature of this temptation, and the complete absence of anything sordid in it. We will not allude at all to the majestic background of this story against which a man

stands out who could actually be tempted by the idea of changing stones into bread in the name of God. We will only contemplate the foreground of the story. The desire for a piece of bread is the only form in which the world of the senses approaches Jesus to tempt him, even as Jesus had asked for himself out of all earth's glorious abundance but a piece of bread in the fourth petition. And how magnificent was his victory over the temptation: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." That is really the word of power, the charm, by which all bodily temptation can be overcome. No one can realize the whole glory and extent of this saying so well as someone who utters it while resisting his body. There we have the unconditional acknowledgement of the spirit, the divine spirit and the divine word which must live in us and be all that lives in us. And how glorious is the reward we shall attain upon this path. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." Spiritual meat, heavenly joy!

But we have not alone a body but a soul. A second world of temptations swims up before our eyes. There is an old saying which runs as follows: "Beware of that which ariseth with thee, eateth out of the same dish with thee and lieth down to rest with thee; beware of thyself." Is this fear of oneself still to be found in modern life to any considerable extent? And is this change really to be considered a great step forward? I heard a man of high position say the other day: "The life of my soul is a subject I have never bothered about, as I have no time for it. But my wife is interested in it." What is the meaning of this statement reduced to practice? It means that a man, however able he may be in his own line, lets his soul harbor anything that it chooses, and pays scant attention to anything that forces its way out of that gloomy cavern within him into the light of day. How much loftier the avowal of another man, a man unusually venerable, whom I heard say: "There are things which issue from the heart—about which we are loth to speak." This delicacy of

perception as regards one's own soul leads to the sixth petition, even as the sixth petition leads to this delicacy of perception.

Beware of thyself! Or even better put, beware of thine own self. This self, this narrow selfish self is the lord of the cavern within us. He must be dethroned and replaced by a better master. Then conditions in the cavern will undergo a great change. But how hard it is to drive him out! He is always slipping away into more remote recesses. For instance, when Luther said—and we know how pleased Goethe was in his youth with the saying—"I am more afraid of my good works than of my sins"—he was well acquainted with this hidden lord. Beware of thine own self! This admonition may well stand as a warning to all of us who are endeavoring to lead our lives in accordance with the demands of our higher, our divine self. How many men have I not known, whose lower self took this very opportunity of playing a shameful trick upon them, and they never knew it or suspected it!

The consequences of the activity of our self

within us have been portrayed in a poem containing a character which has come down to us through the centuries as representative of the self in man; I mean Prometheus. He revolts against the divine sway, yet all the same is powerless to defend himself from the vulture that feeds upon his liver. How accurate a portrait is this of all those in all ages who serve themselves, be their motives and method ever so noble. They may win a notable success. But nevertheless the divine authority in the world remains their master, and the vulture feeds upon the liver, i.e. their soul is never free from torment. Can we deny it?

Perhaps we can nowhere better discover how deeply the self is imbedded in human nature than in considering the second temptation of Jesus. "If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from the pinnacle of the temple; for it is written, 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.'" What really took place there? Perhaps this thought slipped into the

soul of Jesus: Could I not begin my mission by addressing the people from the pinnacle of the temple, and then, trusting in God, let myself fall down from there in the hope of winning their hearts? Once more we will not speak of the quite unique divinity of a soul to whom such a thought could come in the guise of a temptation. We will only share the conclusion at which Jesus arrived: It was my own self speaking, notwithstanding that it was clothed in verses from the Bible. A self of complete purity, such as we must all become since we are to be individually independent, is confronted by temptation in its highest and subtlest form, viz. to feel itself quite particularly hidden in God. It desires to be in God's presence, yet not solely and utterly for the sake of carrying out God's commands. Do we really fathom the extreme subtlety of this temptation? And how did Jesus overcome it? "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." In very truth, this was what he felt; that everything, down to the most intimate details, which we desire in the world for our own sake, is

rebellion against God, is tempting God. We can very quickly perceive this as soon as we pray to God for something that merely affects our welfare, our welfare, I say, not our salvation. Do we not always hear the small voice within us, then, saying: Dost thou not know that God should not be approached in such a fashion? After we have attained to this height of sensibility we begin to be fitted to do God's will, since we exist only for that purpose. It is Jesus, whose mastery over his soul was so pure and so complete, who is later able to say, when speaking of the burden and magnitude of his divine mission: "Not as I will but as thou wilt."

We have a body and we have a soul. But both of them are part of a world which is not only the scene of our labors and of our joys but also of our temptations. And this is a fact of which man to-day is only faintly aware. Many of you I dare say can recall the ingenious story written by Selma Lagerlöf about the knight who kindled a light at the holy sepulcher in Jerusalem and determined to carry it back

home with him without ever allowing it to go out. His experiences while attending to the protection of the sacred flame were such as to make a changed man of him. This story contains a profound meaning. But do you know what other experiences this knight must have had? He must have found out how much wind there was in the world all bent upon blowing his flame out. If anyone determines to be loyal and true to the holy flame in his soul he begins to realize for the first time, and it may be on the very first day, how hard the world makes it for him to do so, no matter how considerately he behaves to his fellow men. He is met with a jeer: "What are you running your head into a wall for?" His answer might well be: "Ah, no, I am merely trying to prevent my light from being blown out!" If we notice so little of all this the reason will be either that we allow our sacred flame to be blown out again at once, or that we have no sacred flame at all but content ourselves with such light as the world gives us. Luther knew a good deal

about this as is shown by his saying: "Temptation is of two kinds; one on the left, which makes us suffer, and one on the right, which makes us feel virtuous, and this is the deadly one." So we need not recount the obvious and coarse temptations which the world provides: Our very nearest and dearest can be a world tempting us to disloyalty to ourselves, and to our flame. "Lead us not into temptation."

But what is the consequence of being defeated by the world? This too is depicted in a poetical portrait which comes down the centuries like a human conscience. The character is not a Roman, this time, nor a Greek, but a German; and his name is Faust. He attempts to possess the world—but loses his soul in the process. My dear friends, the temptation of Faust is not merely a play which we see in the theater, but a daily experience of our own. There are a thousand forms in which we may be asked if we desire worldly powers and honors and love and enjoyment. Very well, we may perhaps *attain* them. But we cannot *make up our minds* to have them without its

entailing the loss of our soul, our own unique and priceless soul!

Now let us cast our eyes upon the third temptation of Jesus and see what a profound bearing it has upon this point. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, all these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Jesus is here confronted with the question: Shall I win the world, conquer it, in order to bring it salvation? Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon all faced a similar question. For they too did not merely have an eye to conquest. In the back of their minds, though naturally on a much lower plane than the divine and exalted level of Jesus, was the desire for welfare and peace. But the vision of Jesus is as clear as sunlight. It is impossible to possess the world, or to conquer it, even for God, without loss of purity, without using guile and force, which is equivalent to worshiping the very devil whom we intend to drive out. "If thou wilt fall down and worship

me." Accordingly the clear and lofty answer wells out from his soul: "It is written thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve!" Here we can marvel at the loftiness of Jesus, as in the first temptation we can marvel at his purity and in the second at his profundity. In an instant he passes through the sum total of the experiences which we encounter in innumerable succession our whole life long. Once and for all, without hesitation or reservation, he renounces the whole world and its individual allurements and he gives us that glorious reply to help us in our struggles against the third type of temptation: "Thou shalt worship God, and him only shalt thou serve!" This is our help in all our struggles with power, and honors, and enjoyment and love. Every single problem which the world can confront us with, without exception, can be rightly solved by this saying. It makes the world harmless, nay more, it makes it divine. The place of temptation becomes a place of divine worship, where God is served and where God is won. No more is man a poor

knight carrying his flame through the world with anxious heart, but God's champion, proclaiming: "I came to cast fire upon the earth and what will I, if it is already kindled?"

Three great classes of temptation assail us mightily, those of the body, the soul, and the world. We are warned by three human portraits, born of the world's conscience, Don Juan, Prometheus, and Faust. We are helped by three glorious sayings of Jesus: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." They who carry these sayings into life in their hearts will offer up the sixth petition aright. Luther once said: "I lie down to sleep with the fifth petition and arise with the sixth." Yea verily, this is true in the deepest sense. In the fifth petition—"Forgive us our debts"—our restless ego enters into God's peace. But in the sixth it comes forth from God again to do battle with body, soul, and the world, and begins to walk with

God. "Lead us not into temptation." Jesus has shown us to-day what this means. We must offer up the sixth petition just as if our ego, our divine self, were ready to arise in all its divine majesty and to live utterly in God.

CHAPTER IX

Deliver Us from Evil

A few years ago one of the men who are anxious to provide a new religion for the present age expressed the opinion that of all the religions that had come into being in the past only one was serviceable for men of the "post-christian era"—those were his exact words—and that was the Persian religion introduced by the great Zarathustra. Zarathustra, in proclaiming the great struggle of light against darkness, has, as it were, foreshadowed the religion of the future. However, he continued, we must take into account as well the tragic conviction of the great Greek poets that there is no wise providence watching over us to guarantee the victory of good over evil, and to be concerned about our welfare or our sorrow. How lamentable it is that men such as he, who see what is right and endeavor to find it,

should have a blind eye for Christianity! For the lofty ideal desired by this man for himself and for his era is also to be found in Christianity. Indeed the conflict of good with evil in the most exalted form conceivable is the very soul of the seventh petition: "Deliver us from evil."

Comes the reply: "Surely you are misinterpreting this petition. It is precisely the fact that there is more longing than effort in this petition, more discontent with the world than victory over it, that makes us dissatisfied with this petition." Anyone who thinks this should just cast one glance upon Jesus himself. Did he look upon the world as a vale of sorrows, or behave as if it were one from which he longed for release? Was not his life the mightiest kind of a battle between light and darkness? Indeed, we can turn our eyes away from Jesus, and be guided by our own experience. Anyone who allows this seventh petition, "Deliver us from evil," to exert a living influence upon him for a considerable time, will begin to notice a change in himself, though not in the world. He

will notice very clearly that evil is the essential enemy of mankind and that he himself is challenged to fight this enemy. That is a very remarkable characteristic of these petitions in the Lord's Prayer. We imagine them to be petitions, but as soon as we take them in real earnest they are transformed into gifts. We pray, e.g. "Give us this day our daily bread," offering up this petition in the spirit of Jesus, and suddenly become aware that our own attitude to the good things of earth has undergone a change. The angel sent by Jesus to carry our wishes up to heaven—for the petition is an angel—brought us a rich gift at the same time, only we did not know it. Accordingly the seventh petition, if offered up aright, reveals not a mere weak sigh, as many imagine, but a gigantic transformation of our soul!

Nor is the present day the first time in which Christianity has been interpreted as the lofty conflict between light and darkness. History records many previous cases, of which the most spiritual perhaps is the story of the Grail. Many people again find a mysterious attrac-

tion in this story to-day. Accordingly we will make use of it to find our way into the spirit of the seventh petition.

How significant it is, to begin with, that only knights who are pure in heart were permitted to serve the Grail. They had first to win the battle of good against evil in themselves. They might still incur guilt, like Parsifal, but they had to learn to overcome themselves by hard struggle, just as he did. This is the way to become a knight of the Grail.

Is there anything so remote from the ideas of the man of to-day as an earnest struggle against his own inclinations? He has so many outside occupations. And after all is not strict attention to one's daily task the best way to find inner peace? Yet one notices in public life how few people have any idea of inner struggles. This fact is noticeable in art, in politics, in literature, yes, and in religion as well. That is the reason why there are so many people anxious to say something who yet have nothing of real value to say. Those who speak to us have never, or hardly ever won a victory over

themselves. It would be an excellent way of preparing oneself for a speech by which a great effect is to be produced, say in a national assembly, to make a real and convincing sacrifice beforehand, perhaps of a totally different kind. From such a sacrifice power is born. And men recognize the fact. "Thy speech betrayeth thee." If two people say the same thing there can be a world of difference in the outcome of the two statements, owing to fundamental differences of living and of inner self-consciousness in the two speakers. It has been observed often enough how quickly children, especially the sensitive ones, are aware whether the admonitions of their parents and teachers carry in them something like an echo of conquests won. This fact can be recognized even in scientific research. A man who has fought many battles with his own soul will have an individual and recognizable manner of fighting for truth as well. The important point is not to win every time, but to put up a brave fight. Such conditions bring to blossom the fairest flowers of human nature.

As woman's especial charm lies in the triumph over suffering, which can often be detected even when they are speaking about a very different subject, so does man's lie in the battles he has won.

But do not imagine that this implies exceptional acts of heroism. Modern life gives us ample opportunity for self-control. Think for instance of the many occasions on which we can do battle with impatience, indolence, and unfriendliness at the telephone. What opportunities to triumph over selfishness are offered by every conversation at a dinner table! We ought to drive this truth home, that we are called to do battle against evil in the world and that we have to begin by winning this battle in our own selves. "Deliver us from evil." Religious history has an object in telling us that the founders of great religions, e.g. Buddha, had to undergo the severest temptations all alone, before they were permitted to appear before the world. The battle which is to be won on the earthly plane must first have been won in the brain of the commander. If

we study the story of the temptations in the gospels—we tried to do this last time—it may seem to us like a gigantic battlefield of the spirit, on which not only the personal struggles of Jesus were carried on, but the conflicts of mankind as well in their most sublimated form. And the triumphant utterances of Jesus stand around this battlefield like monuments of victory. Jesus could not possibly have triumphed over the evil in the world with such earnestness and power and completeness unless he had had deep experience and conflicts of his own.

Now we see how the very story of the Grail conveys an intimate understanding of the fight between light and darkness. Every cry for aid, be it never so faint, is heard in the castle of the Grail. Thereupon one of the knights fares forth to render assistance. He bears within himself two kinds of wisdom from his castle. One he has learned from Amfortas, viz. that suffering is not the actual enemy, but evil is. Accordingly Amfortas had to suffer from the wound dealt him by the spear because he was

to be cleansed of evil. The other kind of wisdom has been learned from Parsifal, viz. a heart stirred by sympathy for his fellows. For Parsifal kept himself outside the knights of the Grail for years by not asking the question that brings relief. Are these not the very two kinds of wisdom we need in order to fight for the light on earth in the proper way? Let your heart be full of sympathy, but remember that suffering is the remedy for evil. Anyone who understands these two truths can become a helper of mankind.

But what has all this to do, you may say, with the case of a subordinate official, who has nothing else to do all day long than write up his lists and distribute his notices? Are you not using too lofty language for a workaday world? No! This is the very element that gives knighthood of the Grail its width of scope and freedom of action. The knights fight not only with evil but with bad conditions of any kind. Anyone that does battle at any place and in any manner with conditions that are harming mankind is a helper of Christ. Let each one of

us try to look upon his particular calling as a field upon which the fight between light and darkness may be carried on. For more opportunities to help than we could have imagined may open up to us. Let each one of us consider the confines of his own little world as a scene where he can champion the cause of human need. After his wife's death Carlyle reproached himself in the bitterest terms for not having inquired about the sufferings she did not talk about. Behold a Parsifal who would not trouble to ask! How much unnecessary suffering is being endured, perhaps in our own immediate circle, merely because no one thinks about making inquiries. Let us consider the phrase—"I don't bother with it"—in the light of Parsifal's story. Nor let us forget that Parsifal forbore to inquire merely because he thought it would be a breach of good manners to do so—and how often we have done the same thing. We do not need to put an outright question, let alone a tactless one. But we can allow ourselves an inner inquiry, an inward sympathy.

Our hearts are lightened when we look away from these depressing sights to Jesus. He is the great ambassador of God, sent out to deal with all human need, because the cry of human need has been heard in God's sanctuary. It is fascinating to watch Jesus taking up arms against all the need and sinfulness of mankind, all alone, with clear vision, ample power, and unfaltering resolution. And how the two forms of the Grail wisdom *come to life* in him! There we see the questioning attitude, that innermost inquiry as to the presence of human need. He had compassion on the multitude. He wept over Jerusalem. Yet the sacred wisdom dwelt in him: evil is the real enemy, not suffering. Therefore he attacks the inmost source of evil. Sin no more. Thy faith hath saved thee. It was not mere happiness he was bringing to men, nor mere health, but salvation. Do not our hearts beat higher to think that there was once an idea of an order of knighthood whose aim was to help Jesus save mankind?

But the story of the Grail has more still to

tell us, contains a more intimate appeal. Many of the details are marvelous in their deep symbolism. The Grail is a vessel fashioned of earth's noblest substance, in which the blood of Christ was once passed around to the disciples by Jesus himself. The light of the Grail outshines the daylight. It is a center from which wonderful forces radiate. Anyone privileged to behold it is secure from death for eight days. Its knights have no other nourishment than its powers. But on Good Friday each year a dove must come and lay a wafer in it and so renew its magic power.

We must translate the truths which men of that age put before their souls in sacred pictures into another language, into the language of spiritual thought. Is not the Grail a picture of man himself as he is to be? Noblest human substance, entirely a shrine for the divine, utterly consecrated to Christ who is his light! Can one imagine a loftier symbol of man? That too is the fashion in which we are to carry on our fight. "Lightbearers must we be, you in your corner, I here in mine." Salva-

tion by light—from evil! A Dominican monk once came to St. Francis of Assisi, hoping to put him in a quandary. "Dear father, how do you understand that passage in the prophet Ezekiel: If thou warn not the wicked of his wicked ways I will require his soul at thy hands? I am acquainted with many men who live a sinful life, yet do I not rebuke them continually for their sins. Am I therefore answerable for their souls?" At first St. Francis was silent. Then he replied: "Yes! the true servant of God rebukes evil continually, but he does so principally by his behavior, by the truth which shines through his words, by the light of his example, and by his whole life." If you would like to have an instance taken from the present you may read that excellent war book by Walter Flex *The Wanderer between Two Worlds.* It tells us of a splendid young German who always became silent when the conversation of his comrades dealt with low things, and afterwards learned from letters how great the effect of his silence had been. Let a man just live, really

live, according to the light that has risen upon him. Only a few days ago I again heard a man relate how people come of their own accord in such a case, to talk to him about religion. They feel the power of the Grail. They want to know how he has the power to be different from themselves.

There is probably not a single one of us who clearly sees how much he could do day by day in battling for the light against the darkness. To take an example, there is plenty of work to be done in striving to keep one's temper in crowded streets, in stores, and at railway stations. This is quite a serious matter in a town the size of Berlin. Take the case of someone who travels to and from work every day by the subway. What an opportunity for good work among his fellow passengers if he misses no chance of behaving like a friend and brother to them all, however much selfishness and unfriendliness he may encounter. "Deliver us from evil." How can we offer up this petition if we do not seize every opportunity to liberate other people from their evils by setting them a

good example? In this way the Grail is borne before them.

Or take a very different case, that of a woman whose husband, to her great distress, will not take part with her in what she considers the highest function in life, viz. religion. Many and many a time have I talked with such women, and have reminded them of what Carlyle said about his wife, that during their years of distress she burned quietly by his side like a lamp! Thus can a wife burn like a clear, steady flame by her husband's side all her life long. Perhaps his attitude toward what she values highly remains unchanged until his death. But afterwards, after death, when he sees that the tale of a higher world was true, when he finds himself confronting a state which he had refused to believe in and feels helpless and at a loss, he may search his memory for a light to guide him. Then perchance he may think of his wife and what she was, and the things she would say to him from time to time, and she may be able to render him the most wonderful service by being his first guide in a

higher world, as Beatrice was to Dante, but in an even lovelier way. Is it not worth while to wait a whole weary lifetime for such a moment as that?

And now let us think of him about whom it is written: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness but shall have the light of life." That was Jesus' way of fighting the darkness—by being light. Everything that mankind upon this earth has ever conceived in the way of the conflict between light and darkness, that which Goethe for instance observed in nature and described in his *Theory of Color,* or what the artist-soul of Rembrandt beheld and endeavored to portray for mankind in an endless succession of pictures, is lacking in the splendor of the gospel account of Jesus' championship of light. His gospel was light, his being was light, his life and his labors were light intensified, light waging a gigantic conflict with the world's darkness, light of divine love. Therefore he won a victory in the poor thief on the cross, for instance. And therefore he wishes to win the

victory in us as well. "Deliver us from evil." That means for each of us individually; let the power of love's light, as it shines in Jesus Christ, become ever stronger within us until it has overcome all our low and wicked tendencies!

Now for the final lesson from the Grail. The name of anyone chosen to serve the Grail appears upon it in letters of light. No one finds the castle of the Grail until he has been chosen. And when he has been chosen, wondrous are the ways by which he is led thither. And when anyone is sent out by the Grail he may not tell his name. If questioned about his name he must take his leave. For that which fights and is victorious in him is the Grail.

What is the meaning of all this? We feel it as soon as we have once really helped another from within. If thanks are given, we may seem to accept them but we feel that they are not due us. It seems to us like honoring the chisel for the work done by the sculptor. For it has never been we who have given the aid; it is that which passed through us. And the more

completely we felt ourselves to be in God's hand, and eliminated ourselves, the better help we were able to render. Perhaps we may have a vivid conviction in such a moment, that our name shines in heaven, in the divine grace, but here on earth we have had to lose it!

Humanity may exert itself to the limit in wrestling with the distress and need of the world and in fighting for progress and development and improvement, but nothing except sacrifice will overcome evil. Force will not accomplish it, nor acute reasoning; only sacrifice with personal devotion. We can discover this to be true by observing our children at home. Of course we can stamp out their naughtiness by severity. But when once a child develops a really evil disposition there is only one thing to be done, viz. pay no heed to other things but enter completely into the child's soul, live with it and in it, and then try to win it over from within. Do you suppose that grown-up people are very different from children in this respect? Do you suppose that the world, taken as a whole, is much better than such a child?

Now we are able to divine why Jesus had to suffer death. "Deliver us from evil." He who was to be the great deliverer from evil must offer up a complete sacrifice of himself. It was under this supreme law that the life of Jesus came. For evil is selfishness in the depths of its being, and selfishness can be overcome only by its antithesis, a still greater self-surrender even unto death. Therefore we as Christians have also a tragedy to face in waging our fight of light against darkness, and it is just as real and exalted a tragedy as the one spoken of at the beginning of this address. This is also the reason why there is a mysterious connection between the Grail and Good Friday. By reflecting upon the death of Jesus, deeply and comprehendingly, as the expression of a love which is marvelous and unparalleled we attain the force which kills out selfishness. That means we are saved. Are we saved?

We cannot conclude our observations about this petition without alluding to two utterances made during recent decades concerning the word salvation. Both utterances were distin-

guished, and both were made by eminent men, and both of them brought heavy charges against Christianity as commonly manifested. Nietzsche was the author of one of them, and I could wish that Christians generally would take it seriously to heart: "His disciples would have to look like saviors to me before I could learn to believe in their savior." Wagner uttered the other one, meaning to imply that the Christianity of his era needed renewing in order to function properly, at the end of Parsifal: "Salvation for the Savior." What do such charges mean to us? Had *we* allowed ourselves to be more nearly saved we should be saviors of the world and true followers of Christ.

When medieval chivalry was in full bloom Wolfram von Eschenbach dreamed a holy dream concerning the union of knighthood with Christianity. Thus his *Parsifal* came to be written. This desire is always to be found in the depths of the German soul; we find it in the very first German poem, *Heliand,* and it appears again later in Luther's song of tri-

umph: "A mighty fortress is our God." And now that a time of heroism is with us once more, the heroism of a war which will eventually be known as "the German war," do we understand what we have to do? Our task is to combine the utmost heroism with the deepest Christianity. Anyone who fights for victory over darkness in the manner described in the teachings of the Grail: "In oneself—Against the world—Through light—Even unto death"—is fulfilling his task. And we will carry in our hearts as the vow of our consecration to this struggle the words of the seventh petition, "Deliver us from evil."

CHAPTER X

For Thine Is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, For Ever and Ever

We all know, doubtless, that these closing words of the Lord's Prayer are not the words of Jesus. They are the answer of mankind, and seldom has a lovelier answer been made. In a short yet mighty echo mankind acknowledges the wonderful gift of Jesus, sending a great wave of gratitude, and desire and affirmation to reverberate against the vault of heaven: "Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory!" When we were candidates for confirmation our pastor told us that this close was an avowal from the first Christian congregation of the reasons for their confidence that this prayer would be heard. Is it God's *good pleasure* to hear our prayer? Yes, for his is the kingdom. *Can* he hear it? Yes, for his is the power. *Will* he hear it? Yes, for his is the

glory. I have often given this explanation myself to the children. But there is much more still in the words. They are a confession of Christ, a very ancient confession of Christ, which does not mention him by name but acknowledges him with complete comprehension, in act and life. If our whole soul is in tune with this chord: "Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory"—not only has the Lord's Prayer found its proper ending but Jesus himself has reached his goal. Indeed if we can conceive the end of the evolution and history of the world to be a majestic hymn of praise resounding through all the breadth and height of space, not indeed a concert of instruments but the inward expression of thousands of free and grateful spirits, then no psalm or poem has approached this pæan so nearly as the close of the Lord's Prayer: "Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory." And if it resounds in us as if our souls were experiencing in advance all the jubilations that will accompany the end of the world, then we have uttered our prayer aright.

But of course there are many things which we men of to-day are no longer able to do, and which we have to learn over again no matter how capable we may be in other directions. Man of to-day is incapable of prayer, and far more incapable still of adoration. Just ask yourself how many hours of your life have been spent in adoration. No doubt all of us have passed minutes in adoration, probably of natural phenomena, but hours of adoration are sadly lacking in modern life. And yet they should constitute the actual wealth of our soul. Lacking such hours of adoration we can never feel ourselves at home in the worlds of which the Lord's Prayer tells us. Anyone who came here by the subway must have heard endless repetitions of that unvarying call: "Step lively, please" which is a kind of watchword of our busy, bustling, and noisy metropolis—and the word "please" had no friendly sound. This is the complete antithesis to the deep calm and repose of soul which are indispensable to true adoration. Modern science looks at the whole world as an exercise in calculation. The answer

is found when everything has been expressed in figures. Even so have innumerable individuals transformed themselves to-day into live calculating machines. If we do not calculate the increase of our funds we calculate the way of dividing up our time so as to at least try to be equal to most of the demands made upon us. Many people nowadays have scarcely any source of satisfaction other than having calculated their way successfully through all the day's obligations! How far removed is this kind of life from that deep reverence for the mystery of the universe and for the marvel of each individual existence which must underlie adoration. If silence is the temple where alone we can find God, and reverence the ceremonial robe for this temple, as we said on commencing our observations upon the Lord's Prayer, then we are talking of a world that has sunk from sight. Can we find it again?

The close of the Lord's Prayer is precisely the place which might help us to find it. Let us call to mind that this close of the Lord's Prayer—this is one side of the matter—was

originally directed against the Roman Empire in all its power and grandeur. The whole known world reëchoed at that time to the tread of the Roman legions. They fought their way out to every boundary and built up the most grandiose structure ever beheld up to that time, an empire which embraced the whole of mankind. And from the middle of this empire, from the lips of one tiny congregation, ring out, quite simply but with thrilling conviction and assurance, the words: "For thine is the kingdom." There is another empire to-day bent once more upon universal conquest upon the grandest scale. I am not referring to the Anglo-Saxon domination, but to the empire of intellectual science. Its champions scale all heights and explore all depths, I mean our men of learning. It seems impossible to resist them. What sort of an empire will it be? Cold, and dead and godless! Charles the Fifth said that the sun never set in his dominions, but in this coming empire the sun will have set for ever, even if the empire is made up of suns. We need not take up arms against this empire any

more than the first Christians did. We need deny none of the astonishing and significant achievements of the human brain. But our own knowledge has greater depths and a loftier goal: "*Thine* is the kingdom."

If we desire an especially convincing proof of this we can hardly do better than look at the region where science has celebrated its most notorious triumphs, viz. the realm of stars. What a glorious teacher of adoration this region is if we do not merely examine it with our brain but allow it to reveal itself to us in spirit. Is there not one all-potent will manifest in the vast expanses of this marvelous realm? And is this will not good? Can we not divine in the majestic order and regularity up yonder the breath of God's holiness? Can we not divine in sun, moon, and stars that daily render us such faithful service by lending us light unselfishly for our tasks, the breath of God's goodness? For it is in this almighty, kind, and holy will that we live. Does not the spirit recognize its creator, who brought it into being? Perhaps we should never have under-

stood the language of the stars, had Christ never come. But now the meaning of all prophecy is revealed and even the farthest stars come forward and say: Have we not always proclaimed and do we not continue to do so until the end of the days, "Thine is the kingdom"? Our men of science say to us: "We shall not stop till we have calculated all earthly factors as we have the heavenly ones." What are we to say in answer? The starry heaven is our model too. But *we* shall not stop until we have brought the whole earth, and especially ourselves, to serve God as thoroughly as those stars up yonder serve the supreme will of God. "Thy will be done as it is in heaven"—and there is good reason for our having the same word for the world above our heads and the world concealed from us in the depths of the future—as it is in heaven, as it is by heaven, so on earth. "Thine is the kingdom."

Perhaps a comparison which leads to a climax will best help us to understand what it means for a human soul to be filled with this conviction about life. Let us begin with King

Francis the First of France saying, after a lost battle, "All is lost, save honor!" and go on to the German philosopher Fichte writing in deep trouble to his betrothed: "I have lost almost everything except courage!" How significant it is that the Frenchman speaks of honor while the German—and Goethe has said something very similar—speaks more inwardly, of courage, and that only by the way. Now let us go up higher and think of Luther's stirring hero-song: "Let them take body, goods, honor, wife and child. Let them go. Is everything lost? No; the kingdom must still be left us." Take one step higher still, into the vast serenity of the stars: "Thine is the kingdom." That is the spirit of Christ contrasted with the attitude of the world. And it is this spirit of Christ we have to win afresh in our modern age. How does our kingdom of the intellect, as represented to-day by such a great name, let us say, as Haeckel, look when regarded in the Christ spirit? How empty and soulless, when you examine it, is all that he has to tell us about the present and the future! When Thomas

More wrote his famous book *Utopia* he desired no one to be admitted to citizenship in Utopia who did not believe in immortality. Do we not feel that no one can really feel at home in this world whose soul does not reëcho the words: "Thine is the kingdom."

And thine is the power! Let us first visit the early Christians in their world and learn from them. Roman empire, Roman dominion! The Roman emperor's power at that time was awe inspiring. The world crouched submissively at his feet. There was no way out nor prospect of any. Yet the Christians affirmed lustily in their secret retreats and subterranean hiding places: "Thine is the power." We look up at the starry heavens. Our earth, weighing billions upon billions of tons, moves quickly, noiselessly but at headlong speed around its sun. And this sun, weighing far more, moves whither? Around some central sun? We do not know. And up yonder are gigantic suns, poised and mobile, weighing many million times as much as our whole planetary system. What an inconceivable fund of energy! What

is man compared to them? A handful of presumption and impotence, nothing more. Yet we look up from our little cosmic corner, our earth, as did the early Christians and say: "Thine is the power." We see not only the physical power, which has nothing to say to us, not only the vastness of this power, not only the repose of this power, and not only the controlled certainty of this power, but above all the spiritual nature of this almighty power which orders and regulates, and we thank God for giving us this overwhelming manifestation of his power and presenting it to us every night anew. This power does not oppress us, it strengthens us as does every power to which we look up in love and reverence; it always strengthens us, and not only this but it raises us up, inasmuch as we know ourselves to be safe in its shelter; more still, it stirs us into activity by its ceaseless inquiry: "What are *you* doing?" This is the power from which we can learn in the very midst of our modern age what Jacob Boehme tried to express in his

beautiful sentence: "To go on one's way in the power of the everlasting majesty."

Let us look from that viewpoint into another world of German life. As just now we undertook to embody the intellectual struggles of our age in Haeckel, so we may see its imperialistic strivings embodied in Nietzsche. Of course a world in which nature is supposed to have no other meaning than force will bring man gradually to the point of clamoring: "Dominion, dominion!" But imagine yourselves, just once, to be standing in spirit on some distant and lofty star, and listening thence to all the sighs and groans of "Dominion, dominion" arising from our earth. And you will discover, once and for all, what value to assign to that clamor for dominion. And now listen from that same star to the experience of St. Paul, as recorded in the words: "When I am weak then I am strong." Up there these words ring true, and sound and noble, and harmonize with the language of the stars: "Thine is the power." And I would that

each one of us could know some of the thrill, like that of an electric current, but much more subjective, and vivid and spiritual, of coming into contact with the power of God. "Thine is the power."

The world at that time was filled with the power and the empire and the glory of Rome. No doubt innumerable fantastic tales were current of the splendors of the imperial court. But those poor persecuted individuals who at that time constituted the discipleship of Christ were not moved by them in the least. "Thine is the glory." God's glory! Perhaps a faint wish rises at times from the heart of man even to-day, to behold a little of it as the men of earlier days did. Well, when the sun rises over the mountains, filling all the firmament with jubilation and glory, is not that a sufficient manifestation of God's glory? Or the sunlight of a single spring day, in which so much bliss and rejoicing lies concealed? Or—most inspiring of all—the starry heavens? It is my serious conviction that we should make it a daily habit, yes and duty, to let ourselves be filled with this life-giving feeling to the very depths

of our souls, by the sight of the starry heavens, which God spreads every night over all mankind: "Thine is the glory." The words of a child often come to my mind, who said, after looking at the starry heavens, "If the wrong side of the sky looks so beautiful what must the right side look like?"

I take it, all our grown-up wisdom will not take us any farther than this child's wisdom. Plato spoke in moving words of beholding eternal beauty. But glory is more than beauty. Why do we withdraw our souls from a foretaste of the divine glory which God desires to present to us day by day in the starry heavens?

If you were to ask me to name a Christian of the olden time who had a vivid premonition of God's glory, St. Francis would come to my mind. For during the last days of his life he longed for music, but men denied it to him. Then one morning he awoke and said: "God sent me an angel who played such wonderful melodies to me in a dream that I felt one more stroke of his bow would cause my soul to swoon for sheer joy!" I do not know if a better and more beautiful description of the summit of

human bliss is to be found. And could not the stars bring us an experience similar to this, those angels whom God sends to us every evening to play wonderful melodies to us? Yes, the words "Thine is the glory" should peal within us like a chorus of the stars. And as the shell held up to our ear seems to go on murmuring ceaselessly to us of the waves it once knew, so our soul ought to go on telling us, through all our words and deeds, about the glory of God as we were able to take it into ourselves in hours of holy adoration. Then trust would also break out of our souls with an impetuous rush, as it did once out of Fichte's soul at a time when he was greatly moved: "In the end—and where is there an end?—in the end the kingdom of God must come forth in its might and its power and its glory!"

And now when we turn to take another look at our German world and see how people long and strive for happiness, how patiently they pinch and scrape, and trust in the things which —here again I am going to make use of a name which embodies this whole world of ideas for many people—the name of Karl Marx stands

for, how trifling and shallow it all appears! We need only think of the experience of St. John which I am now going to place alongside of those of Luther and St. Paul: "We beheld this glory, a glory as of the only-begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth." But now we are at the portal of the holy of holies, round which we have hitherto been moving from all directions. "Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory"—that is Jesus. These are his characteristics. It is a description of him, not of his outward appearance but of his inner being. "Thine is the kingdom." That is what filled his whole spirit, making him so royal and so godlike. He had no thoughts which were not conceived in accordance with this kingdom. He said no word which did not reflect the radiance of the kingdom of God which is to come. "Thine is the power." His whole will was fortified by this power. It bore him up, urged him on, strengthened and uplifted him. Arrayed in power from on high he goes his way through life, healing, battling, suffering, victorious. "And thine is the glory." All his emotions are charged with it. It is his

own soul's nature. "The glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them." The highest conceivable glory, as we divine it while adoring the stars, and lived with all possible purity in a human life, is Jesus.

And now we begin to see how we ought to pray this close of the Lord's Prayer. The wise men from the East, so we are told, once brought gold and frankincense and myrrh to offer to their star. Likewise do we bring to our star—the star of which the poem sings,

> Lovelier than the sun, and lovelier
> Than all the little stars—

an offering of *our* gifts. In the place of shining gold we offer him our spirit; all our thoughts must be illuminated more and more by this one great thought, the kingdom of heaven. "Thine is the kingdom." Instead of aromatic, pungent myrrh we bring him our will; our whole will must be filled more and more in action, control, and life by divine power. "Thine is the power." And in the place of the fragrance of incense wafted abroad we offer him our soul; all our feelings must be

penetrated and transformed more and more by God's glory. "Thine is the glory." Anyone who so prays the Lord's Prayer as to bring an offering of his whole being—thought, feeling, and will—to God, must, I think, be praying it aright.

Here we conclude our study of the Lord's Prayer. Let me confess to you that I feel almost inclined to begin over again and commence a fresh series of addresses upon the Lord's Prayer. So great is my conviction that we have been able to bring but a few of its treasures up from the deeps into the daylight. Nevertheless, let us wait five or ten years, until we have made an advance ourselves. But if anyone thinks, and it has already been said, "Now I am going to find it harder than ever to pray the Lord's Prayer, since each individual petition appears to be overflowing with meaning and content," I must remind him of what was said earlier in these chapters. Would it do any harm not to pray the Lord's Prayer in future as a continuous prayer? Or to offer up just one of its petitions? Or even at times to carry one of the petitions in our soul for

weeks together? Once upon a time Luther cut the string of the rosary and taught Christians to pray, instead of a hundred paternosters, one Lord's Prayer. Perhaps it is an even higher stage now to divide the Lord's Prayer up over a long period of our life, or at least to pray it *in this way also.* We will close with the verses:

From far, O Lord,
I have beheld thy throne;
My heart would fain
Go where mine eyes have gone;
And so too would my weary life be there,
Lord of all spirits, in thy loving care.

My spirit saw
Such wondrous visions bright,
Omnipotent One
Who saidst—Let there be light!
Would that this day it might be given me
To dwell there henceforth everlastingly.

The Holy City!
I am well content;
My tireless feet
Henceforth are thither bent;
And one day they will walk those streets of gold
Whose memory mine eyes forever hold.

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